



The Afghan War in 2013

Meeting the Challenges of Transition

VOLUME III Security and the ANSF

AUTHOR

Anthony H. Cordesman

with assistance from Bryan Gold and Ashley Hess

A Report of the CSIS Burke Chair in Strategy
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
CIP information available on request.

ISBNs: 978-1-4422-2501-5 (pb); 978-1-4422-2502-2 (eBook)

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	VIII
Creating Adequate Afghan Security Forces.....	VIII
The Need for Realistic, Transparent, and Affordable Plans for the Afghan Security Forces	VIII
Shaping Transition Around Limited Military Success.....	X
Continued US and Allied Support for the Key Elements of the ANSF Will Be Needed Through 2018.....	XII
Conditions-Based Support for the ANSF.....	XII
 UNCERTAIN MILITARY PROGRESS: TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS DO NOT MEASURE OVERALL PROGRESS OR SUCCESS.....	 1
Mixed Progress in the Fighting.....	1
<i>Real-World Trends in Unclassified Metrics.....</i>	<i>3</i>
A Past Reliance on Unclassified Metrics That Failed to Show Real Progress Since 2009.....	3
“Spinning” a Largely Irrelevant Metric: Enemy-Initiated Attacks or EIAs	11
Lies by Omission? Dropping the Metrics That May Be Less Favorable But Also Could Reflect Actual ANSF Performance	20
<i>Real-World Trends in the Fighting in Helmand and Kandahar During the Peak of the Surge</i>	<i>22</i>
Searching for Metrics That Really Matter in a War of Political Attrition	22
Impact of Civilian Casualties on Afghan Transition	23
Targeted Killings.....	26
The Importance of the Narrative	26
<i>Taliban Strengths and Weaknesses.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Overall Security Situation and Trends.....</i>	<i>28</i>
Blending Metrics and Narrative	30
 (POLITICALLY DRIVEN?) PLANS FOR TRANSITIONING PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS.....	 35
Plan and Conditions for Transfer	35
Progress to Date	40
ANSO’s Indirect Report on “Progress”	44
Drawing the Right Conclusions About Reporting on Security and Progress in the War	47
 MONEY FIGHTS AS WELL AS TALKS: ANSF FUNDING DURING AND AFTER 2014.....	 47
A History of Erratic Resourcing	49
<i>The Need to Fund the Future</i>	<i>49</i>

DEALING WITH THE ANSF AS ANOTHER UNCERTAIN ELEMENT OF TRANSITION	53
Focusing on the Real-World Structure of the ANSF and Not Meaningless	
Manpower Totals	53
The Effective “Regular” Force Is Likely to Be Closer to 240,000 Than 352,000	57
Uncertain Metrics for Shaping the Force	62
Measuring Progress in Force Generation	65
<i>The MoD and the MoIA</i>	66
 SHAPING THE ANA: THE CORE OF AFGHAN MISSION- CAPABLE FORCES	 68
The Near-Term Problem of Attrition	68
The Longer-Term Need for Patience and Continuing Outside Support in Building the MoD, ANA, and AAF	70
Dealing with Key Force-Building Challenges	70
<i>Progress as of Late 2011</i>	77
<i>Progress as of Spring 2012</i>	79
<i>Progress as of Winter 2012</i>	83
Real Progress Not Reflect in the CM and CUAT Ratings	85
The AAF Continues to Lag and Will Not Be Fly Ready For Transition Before 2017	88
Allocating ANA and Other Key Combat Forces	89
Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay	91
 ACCEPTING THE REAL-WORLD CAPABILITY OF THE POLICE FORCES	 92
Dealing with Key Force-Building Challenges	92
Uncertain Progress in Many ANP Force Elements: Setting the Stage	98
Uncertain Progress in Many ANP Force Elements: The Level of Overall Progress at the End of 2012	102
Problems in the Afghan Border Police (ABP)	105
Problems in the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP)	106
The Afghan Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and Police Special Forces	107
Problems in Assessing Police Readiness and Capability	109
Dealing Realistically with the Afghan Police Force	110
Accept Marginal Success in Progress Made in the Rule of Law and Dealing with the Current Level of Corruption	111
Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay	114
 THE AFGHAN LOCAL POLICE (ALP)	 115
The Current Status of the ALP	115
The Changing Role of the ALP	116
The Challenges in the ALP Program	120
Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay	121

PRIVATE SECURITY CONTRACTORS AND THE AFGHAN PUBLIC PROTECTION FORCE	124
INSIDER ATTACKS: “GREEN-ON-BLUE” AND “GREEN-ON- GREEN”	129
The Political and Strategic Impact of Such Attacks.....	131
Seeking to Solve the Problem	131
Looking Beyond Green-on-Blue to Green-on-Green and the Strategic Impact	133
Accept Risk and Limited Casualties or Accept Defeat.....	134
US AND ISAF WITHDRAWAL WITH OR WITHOUT ADEQUATE ADVISORS, TRAINERS, PARTNERS, AND ENABLERS?	136
Current Problems with Trainers and Partners	136
The Most Critical Problems Affecting the US and ISAF Presence Regard What Happens After 2014	139
Vague Statements Instead of Plans	139
No Clear Picture of Continuing US and ISAF Combat and Enabler Capability After 2014	141
Do You Really Need Insurgents When You Have an Indecisive White House?.....	145
CREATING ADEQUATE AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES.....	146
Create Realistic, Transparent, and Affordable Plans for the Afghan Security Forces	146
Continued US and Allied Support for the Key Elements of the ANSF Will Be Needed Through 2018.....	148
Conditions-Based Support for the ANSF.....	149
THE UNDERLYING NEED TO DEBATE STAYING IN AFGHANISTAN	150

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: OSD Assessment of Security Metrics 2011 – 2012, Year-over-Year (YoY) Change April 1 – September 30.....	4
Figure 2: Significant Insurgent Acts by Month: Real Progress in Iraq versus No Real Progress in Afghanistan – Part One.....	5
Figure 2: Significant Insurgent Acts by Month: Real Progress in Iraq versus No Real Progress in Afghanistan – Part Two.....	6
Figure 3: OSD Estimates of Monthly IED and Mine Explosions (April 2009 – September 2012) Show Decrease in Numbers But UN Estimate Shows a Rise in Civilian Casualties – Part One.....	7
Figure 3: OSD Estimates of Monthly IED and Mine Explosions (April 2009 – September 2012) Show Decrease in Numbers But UN Estimate Shows a Rise in Civilian Casualties – Part Two.....	8
Figure 4: DoD Estimate of Monthly Civilian Deaths and Injuries Caused by Insurgents and ISAF (April 2009 – September 2012).....	9
Figure 5: OSD Assessment of Insider Attacks.....	10
Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 – Part One.....	13
Figure 7: ISAF Assessment of Nationwide YoY Change for Monthly Enemy-Initiated Attacks (April 2009 – October 2012).....	14
Figure 8: OSD Assessment of Monthly YoY Change in Enemy-Initiated Attacks for RC-Southwest (April 2009 – September 2012).....	15
Figure 9: OSD Assessment of Northern Helmand River Valley Area EIA Location Changes, YoY Change, June – September 2011 vs. 2012.....	16
Figure 10: Violence in Helmand: January – September 2012.....	17
Figure 11: OSD Assessment of Monthly YoY Change in Enemy-Initiated Attacks for RC-South (April 2009 – September 2012).....	18
Figure 12: OSD Assessment of Kandahar EIA Location Changes, YoY Change, June – September 2011 vs. 2012.....	19
Figure 13: Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012.....	21
Figure 14: Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan.....	32
Figure 15: Civilian Deaths and Injuries by ANSF Forces.....	33
Figure 16: Trends in Casualties and Targeted Killings: 2010-2014.....	34
Figure 17: Plan for Transferring Security Responsibility – Part One.....	38
Figure 17: Plan for Transferring Security Responsibility – Part Two.....	39
Figure 18: Progress in Transition Tranches as of March 2013.....	43
Figure 19: ISAF Map of Tranches Four and Five vs. ANSO Risk Assessment Based on Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012.....	46
Figure 20: Projected US and Other Donor Support for the ANSF.....	51
Figure 21: Major Questions for the Future: Force Expansion Under Massive Stress While Funding Plans Go Down.....	52
Figure 22: The Power Structure of Afghan Forces During and After Transition in 2014.....	54
Figure 23: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part One.....	60
Figure 23: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part Two.....	61

Figure 24: ANSF Funding Levels: Past and Projected	64
Figure 25: ANSF Development – Institutional Metrics and Benchmarks	67
Figure 26: ANSF Forces and Force Goals: ANA	73
Figure 27: Manning and Equipment of the ANA	74
Figure 28: Progress in the MoD and General Staff.....	75
Figure 29: Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Rating for the ANA (January 30, 2013)	76
Figure 30: Levels of Contingency Operation and Trend in Partnered Operations	87
Figure 31: Afghan Army Forces in 2012.....	90
Figure 32: ANSF Forces and Force Goals: ANP.....	94
Figure 33: Manning and Cost of Equipment of ANP	95
Figure 34: Limits to the Readiness of the MoIA: End 2012.....	96
Figure 35: Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Rating for the ANP	97
(January 30, 2013)	97
Figure 36: Popular Perceptions of Corruption in the ANSF, Government, and Justice System.....	113
Figure 37: ALP Map as of September 26, 2012	123
Figure 38: Private Security Personnel Working for the Department of Defense in Afghanistan	124
Figure 39: Insider Attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel (2007-2012)	130
Figure 40: Key Data on Trainers and Training – Part One.....	137
Figure 40: Key Data on Trainers and Training – Part Two	138
Figure 41: US Troop Levels in Afghanistan (2001-2012).....	144

Executive Summary

Creating Adequate Afghan Security Forces

The problems involved in shaping and funding the complex mix of Afghan army, regular police, local police forces, militias, and contract or Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) security forces would be less important if they did not coincide so directly with efforts to create a broad transition to ANSF security operations far more quickly than previously planned. The fact is, however, that the transition to reliance on Afghan forces now has to be much quicker than US, ISAF, and NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A) planners counted on even a year ago, and must deal with the reality that there is declining support for outside force deployments and funding.

The Need for Realistic, Transparent, and Affordable Plans for the Afghan Security Forces

One key step is to make the actual level of real-world progress in the ANSF far more transparent and show that there really is a credible set of force plans that can be supported with real-world levels of resources. One key task is to focus on a net assessment of the ANSF's military and political capabilities to actually achieve some form of "victory."

These efforts should focus on the fact that the key task in ANSF development is not to generate more forces, but to generate more effective forces. Moreover, Afghan forces should not be rated on success in meeting manning, training, and equipment goals and/or building facilities.

The Real-World ANSF That Emerges from Transition Will Be Far Different from Today's Force and Manpower Goals

Afghans, as well as the US and its allies, will all need to accept the fact that the ANSF will be driven by pressures that mean major changes in its structure and force goals are inevitable as Transition occurs. These pressures include:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule-of-law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real-world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduce the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning and which are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.

- Reductions in estimates of the annual cost of the ANSF from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in performance standards and goals.

Measure Effectiveness on the Basis of Net Assessment of Performance Relative to the Threat

Creating an effective ANSF requires a new approach to assessing the development of Afghan forces that is centered on a conditions-based net assessment of how given elements of the ANSF actually perform relative to insurgent factions, tied to a similar assessment of the relative success of the Afghan government, insurgents, power brokers, and other factions in winning support in given areas.

Such assessments must focus on which elements of the ANSF prove to be most effective as Transition occurs as well as their performance in the field. The key test of success from this campaign season onwards will be how key elements of the ANSF actually perform, what level of leadership and unity exists within the Afghan government, who wins public support in key provinces and districts, what level of resources are really required for valuable force elements, and what level of resources are actually available.

Create a Layered Defense That Makes the Most Effective Use of the ANA, AAF, ANCOPS, and Other Elite Elements of the ANP

Plans, force development efforts, and future plans should be based on separately assessing each element of the ANSF. Training, aid, and Afghan resources must be concentrated on building up the force elements that can actually perform effectively in the field. It is both meaningless and actively misleading to focus on the total manning and size of the ANSF, rather than assess it by service.

- The key elements of the force now include large parts of the Afghan National Army (ANA), which has a current force goal of some 172,005 – or some 49% of the present total manpower goal. The key issue for the success of the entire ANSF will be the performance of the ANA's seven corps in the field, the level of threat involved, the capability to sustain and support these forces, and their future cost relative to future resources.
- Another key element will be the ability to build up a meaningful Afghan Air Force (AAF) during 2014-2017, in which the present manpower goal is only 7,639 men or 2% of the 352,000-man force. However, actual air capabilities in terms of combat sustainable aircraft will be a critical factor in the development of the force.
- A third key element will be the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), which has a present manpower goal of 14,451 or only 4% of the 352,000, but which is one of the few fully effective paramilitary elements of the Afghan National Police (ANP). The same will be true of police equivalents of Special Operations Forces (SOF) and security detachments, and the paramilitary elements of the Directorate of National Security (DNS).
- The Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) should be supported, but support should be conditional and focus on effective units, ones that operate with suitable levels of integrity and central government control, and prove effective in the field. It should be conditional on effective Afghan national leadership and management by the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoIA).

The Role of the Afghan Local Police

The future capability of the best elements of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) and the militias that support the government – some 30,000-40,000 men – will do much to

determine the government's ability to hold key rural areas. These elements are not included in the debate over total manning numbers like 352,000 or 228,500, which involves a theoretical discussion over how to reduce the entire ANSF in the future long before the need for a given force becomes clear.

It is already clear that the creation of the ALP is seen as a major threat by the Taliban, and provides a critical local layer of defense that stays in threatened areas, that is highly motivated to secure these areas, that has limited cost, and can be tied to the central government through the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to the extent the central government can win popular support.

At the same time, the ALP's future is still uncertain. It presents many problems in terms of potential abuses of local power. It is unclear how well it will hold together when US and Afghan SOF and other trainers leave ALP units. The ANA and ANP have mixed reactions to the ALP, and there have been serious problems when corrupt or ineffective District Police Chiefs of Police (DCOPS) have failed to work with the ALP. But, it should be stressed that some form of local forces will be critical and the abuses that some elements of the ALP may create must be compared to the real-world abuses of the ANP and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) officials in many areas. Comparing the problems in the ALP to an idealized ANP and GIROA structure that does not and will not exist is not a meaningful basis for real-world planning.

**Other Elements of the ANP Will Have Marginal Effectiveness,
Remain Corrupt, Lack Adequate Support from Civil Governance and
the Other Elements of a Justice System, and Will Be Tied to Local
Power Brokers**

The other elements of the ANP – such as the AUP and the ABP – do include some highly effective units and many others that have some utility. However, many of these forces, which make up some 45% of the 352,000 total, will remain corrupt, have limited effectiveness, and lack support from effective governance in the field and from the other elements of a criminal justice system.

Barring far stronger Afghan leadership than now seems likely to emerge in 2014, many elements of the ANP may also revert to control by local power brokers or the highest bidder, and much or most of the present NTM-A effort and goals will be replaced with Afghan solutions that allow the AUP and ABP to revert to forces shaped by Afghan resources and standards and that have limited effectiveness.

NTM-A and its successor should continue to try to develop the best force they can, but there should be no illusions. Most of the ANP will need to be dealt with using an order-of-battle approach that makes the best use of the best elements of the AUP and ABP and finds some place to locate the rest where they can do some good or the least harm.

Shaping Transition Around Limited Military Success

The good news is that the security situation is improving in some important ways in spite of these problems, and key elements of the ANSF are making progress. The bad news is that plans for new offensives in the East have been largely abandoned, the political climate in the US has moved towards a sharper downsizing of the US commitment after

2014 and towards more rapid cuts in US troop levels and spending between the end of the campaign season in 2013 and the end of 2014.

The period between 2014 and 2020 will involve an ongoing war of political and military attrition between the Afghan government and ANSF and various insurgent factions. It will also be a struggle between regional/ethnic/sectarian factions, warlords, tribal areas, and influence/control by various insurgent factions.

It will be a struggle to create a mix of central government and regional/local power that can hold key population centers and as much of the country as possible, rather than focus on a nation-wide counterinsurgency effort. It will mean doing more and more the Afghan way on Afghan terms - even when this means reliance on effective local and regional powerbrokers. This also means accepting the fact that tribalism, a functional level of corruption and nepotism, reliance on local custom and values, and limits to human rights and the rule of law will sometimes be the price. A live compromise will be better than a dead ideal.

The Lack of Reliable Assessments of Security and the Threat

Putting the security aspects of Transition in perspective is complicated by a lack of effective analysis and meaningful transparency. It is difficult to assess the current security situation in Afghanistan, much less the situation that will emerge through 2014 and beyond.

Past official reporting on the war has been filled with too much spin and too many omissions to make it possible to predict the course of the fighting. Previous US and ISAF reporting has focused on tactical measures like enemy-initiated and complex attacks that grossly favor US and allied military forces at a time the insurgents have no reason to concentrate on direct attacks. Rather, insurgents have every reason to seek to expand their influence without directly fighting Western troops, attack the Afghan government, use major attacks and tactics like “green-on-blue” attacks to speed US/ISAF withdrawal, push aid workers and NGOs out, and further weaken already hostile popular support for the war.

Until the US and ISAF honestly and publicly assess areas of insurgent control and influence, the full range of insurgent violence, its political intent, impact, and how this compares with areas of Afghan government and ANSF influence and control, their reporting lacks the scope and integrity to be trustworthy or make effective Transition planning possible.

Holding Most Population Centers and Key Lines of Communication (LoCs)

That said, it still seems likely that the US, its allies, and Afghan forces have done enough damage to the various insurgent factions so that a combination of aid, effective Afghan leadership, and the ANSF *could* contain the insurgents to limited areas on the border and stop them from gaining control of major population centers. The result would still be a war of political attrition, but one in which a combination of the Afghan government and local regional/ethnic forces might both contain and win after 2014.

There is no way to make a firm estimate of how probable this military success will be. No one can predict the quality of Afghan leadership and Transition over the years to come,

progress in the different elements of the ANSF, or the level of continued outside aid and support. There is no credible military and political baseline to work with as long as the US and ISAF avoid public transparency and focus on spin and deliberate omission of key aspects of the war to the point where reporting has become a de facto liars' contest.

These are challenges that it may still be possible to meet if Afghans and the US and its allies set reasonable goals and focus on real-world priorities rather than the illusions of the past. Even if many of the current political and security goals are not met, this does not mean that Afghanistan cannot achieve relative stability based on some form of de facto federalism or sharing of power between the central government and given factions.

The various insurgent groups still represent relatively small, unpopular movements with ethnic and sectarian ties that limit their influence in many parts of the country. This may limit insurgent gains as well as mitigate the risk that Afghanistan will become a center of terrorism.

Continued US and Allied Support for the Key Elements of the ANSF Will Be Needed Through 2018

The US and its allies need to recognize that many elements of even the ANA will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that – if combat continues – they will require the support of outside of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment.

At present, this seems likely to require a minimum of some 10,000 US forces and some 2,000-2,500 allied forces to provide the full ranges of enabling and supporting services that are needed, a “four corner” training and partnering presence that can cover every major threatened area through at least the corps level, and support in areas like airpower, medevac, intelligence, combat emergencies, and correcting for key problems in logistics and support. Afghan forces that have been rushed into being will need conditions-based support based on merit and not arbitrary outside manning and funding.

Conditions-Based Support for the ANSF

At the same time, “conditions-based” support does not mean open-ended support for the ANSF any more than it does for the Afghan civil government or economy. No one outside Afghanistan owes Afghanistan support if the government fails to earn it. At present, the lack of leadership, reliance on power brokering, and corruption in both the ANSF and on the civil side of Afghanistan are as much a threat as the insurgents.

If the Afghans cannot find a successful leader in 2014, produce a reasonable degree of unity and governance, reduce corruption and power brokering to more acceptable levels, and show that they can make the ANSF effective, the US and its allies should react to these facts based on the reality that they have higher strategic priorities than Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The US should be honest in privately communicating to Afghan officials that it already has many incentives to leave Afghanistan and use its resources elsewhere. Moreover, it should remind them that the US has already shown it can largely walk away from Iraq – a country with far more strategic importance than Afghanistan, that it has many higher-priority strategic interests throughout the world, and that it has increasingly constrained resources with which to meet them.

The US and its allies should make it politely but firmly clear that:

- US and other allied strategic interests in Afghanistan are limited, there are many other priorities, and the US and other states can and will leave if Afghans fail to help themselves.
- Afghanistan must demonstrate it has an effective enough president and structure of governance after the 2014 election to earn US and allied support, or see aid and support cut or shifted in part to regional centers of power.
- Corruption and power brokering needs to be sharply reduced and far more emphasis needs to be placed on effective governance.
- The pledges the Afghan government made for reform at the Tokyo conference actually need to be kept.
- Aid will be cut or will not go through GIRoA if GIRoA cannot use it effectively and with reasonable levels of integrity.
- The military aid, advisory, and enabling effort will be dependent on Afghan's action and agreement to an effective Bilateral Security Agreement and implementation of a broader Strategic Partnership.
- Grossly corrupt officials and officers that threaten Afghan security and stability during Transition will not be tolerated after the 2014 election, and aid will be halted or reduced to force such changes.

In the case of the ANSF, the US and its allies should make it clear that they are prepared to cut support and funding for force elements that remain grossly corrupt and serve power brokers in ways that do not provide stability or assist the people. If the effort to create “Afghan good enough” results in failed Afghan leadership, governance, or ANSF development, the US and its allies should regard an exit from Afghanistan as mandatory.

Uncertain Military Progress: Tactical Encounters Do Not Measure Overall Progress or Success

The third major factor that will shape the success of Transition is the level of security that can be maintained and enhanced as Transition occurs, and the effectiveness of the ANSF in combat as US and other International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) forces are largely withdrawn.

Unless the Taliban and other insurgents fundamentally change their behavior, their peace-negotiating efforts are likely to prove little more than an extension of war by other means. The “Emirates” web site shows no sign of compromise, the insurgents are committed to a 2013 offensive, and Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar stated that the Taliban viewed attacks on international military forces by pro-Taliban Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) members as a key strategy in the Taliban’s attempts to regain control.¹ The key insurgent groups are highly ideological, may well believe they are winning, and have strong incentives to continue fighting through and after Transition at the end of 2014.

Any realistic assessment of both the current security situation in Afghanistan and the prospects for Transition must deal with the limits to progress in the overall fight against the Taliban and other insurgents, as well as problems in creating Afghan forces. It must be sensitive to the fact that the ANSF cannot succeed without adequate Afghan leadership and governance, and without substantial outside funding.

Mixed Progress in the Fighting

It is almost impossible to determine either the trends in the security situation or the potential ability of the ANSF to cope with Transition on the basis of current unclassified reporting.

ISAF and the ANSF have made gains against the insurgents. They have scored important gains against insurgent leaders and cadres and in clearing insurgent forces from the south. They have secured eight out of ten major population centers, and most major lines of communication. They have not, however, defeated the insurgents, been able to make the full range of gains in the south and east that the US and ISAF hoped for in launching the surge, denied the insurgents sanctuaries in Pakistan, or kept the insurgents from having a significant presence and influence in many areas scattered throughout the country. The ISAF and ANSF ability to win tactical clashes has not been matched by broader victory at either the political or military level, and the Afghan government has made slow progress in winning popular support and trust.

The end result is that Transition to a future where the ANSF must do virtually all of the fighting cannot be based on “victory,” but must be based on seeking to give the Afghan government and the ANSF the capability to hold most population centers and critical areas, to push some elements of the insurgency towards peace integration into Afghan

¹ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service 7-5700, January 4, 2013, p. 14.

politics, and either contain the rest of the insurgents or defeat them in detail over time in the years that follow 2014.

Unfortunately, ISAF and the US have reported on the “positive” trends in the fight against the insurgents in ways that are all too close to the body counts made before the Tet Offensive in Vietnam.

They have reported on carefully selected indicators of tactical progress – the kinetics – in a war that is actually a war of political attrition. The result has failed to provide anything like an honest unclassified picture of the war, and has in fact reverted to the mistakes ISAF made in focusing on tactical clashes before 2009. Worse, the main metric ISAF has used – enemy-initiated attack or EIAs – has backfired. Rather than showing continuing positive trends, it came to show negative trends during 2011 to 2012 and never showed overall progress above the levels in 2009 when the surge in US and other ISAF forces started.

ISAF has failed to develop metrics that show even tactical progress at the highpoint in ISAF deployments, and that ISAF and the ANSF can cope with insurgent expectations of withdrawal by 2014. It has downplayed or ignored political dimensions of the war like high-profile attacks, improvised explosive device (IED) belts, maintaining a low-level presence and capability to intimidate, green-on-green and green-on-blue attacks, exploitation of sanctuaries in Pakistan, and political efforts to exploit Afghan corruption and ISAF withdrawal. The end result is that ISAF has failed to show the real progress that ISAF and the ANSF are actually making

ISAF’s acceptance of the reality in March 2013 does, however, give ISAF and the US the opportunity to develop new and more realistic measures of security, stability, and military progress. As a result, ISAF is comprehensively rethinking its past emphasis on the tactical and military dimensions of the insurgency to the exclusion of the political dimensions of the struggle, and attempts to spin the trends in EIAs that made them the hollow equivalent of the body counts made in Vietnam

ISAF is considering new unclassified reporting methods that would combine a range of military metrics with measures of political and economic trends. No final decisions seem to have been reached, and no initial reporting is available. ISAF experts have made it clear, however, that their current assessment indicates that insurgent forces will still be active and a major threat well beyond 2014, particularly in the east, south, and southwest. They have also made it clear that they believe insurgent enclaves will exist in the north and center, and insurgent sanctuaries will continue to exist in Pakistan.

Moreover, ISAF and the ANSF are moving towards more realistic measure of ANSF capability and a broader approach to assessing ANSF force that include key new elements like the Afghan Local Police (ALP). They are moving away from combat unit rating systems that emphasize measures of how ANSF forces are generated to a focus on how they actually perform – the measures that will actually count in the field. They are adding the ALP to a concept of layered defense that includes the Afghan National Army (ANA) and that takes more realistic account of the strengths and weaknesses of the various elements of the Afghan National Police or ANP.

Real-World Trends in Unclassified Metrics

There are good reasons for the shift in ISAF's approach to assessing the threat and helping the ANSF move forward. The Afghan government and ANSF may be able to hold most populated areas, and much of the country. Much depends, however, on progress during the 2013 campaign season – the last season where major ISAF forces will be active in combat – and how well the ANSF can develop and hold in 2014 and the years that follow. ISAF is also adopting a new approach to layered defense and to structuring the ANSF around its estimate that Transition can leave the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and the ANSF with the ability to hold and secure most of the population and critical parts of the country but still very much at war.

A Past Reliance on Unclassified Metrics That Failed to Show Real Progress Since 2009

As **Figure 1** to **Figure 5** show, there has not been any clear pattern of military success as a result of the surge after 2009. The figures that follow show there are as many metrics that show a constant or increasing level of violence as there are that show any progress.

- **Figure 1** shows that there has been no meaningful overall improvement in combat statistics over the last year.
- **Figure 2** reflects the trends in Significant Acts – the metric that was the focus of most reporting on combat trends during the surge in the Iraq War. The overall decline from 2010 to 2011 needs to be contrasted with the trend in 2009, showing that combat in 2011 was more intense than in 2009 when the surge began.
- **Figure 3** illustrates how defining IED incidents can be used to show more positive trends. In this Figure, total IED attacks increased between 2010 and 2011.
- **Figure 4** shows total civilian casualties rather than a metric tied to ISAF and ANSF activity. The numbers in 2001 are higher than in both 2009 and 2010.
- **Figure 5** shows the insurgent's ability to find a new political focus for military activity: "green-on-blue" attacks. These trends, and ISAF countermeasures, are discussed in more detail later in this report. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) reported in December 2012 that "green-on-blue" or "insider attacks" on ISAF personnel rose from 6 in 2009 to 11 in 2010, 20 in 2011, and 37 in 2012 – six times higher in 2012 than 2009. "Green-on-green" or "insider attacks" on ANSF personnel rose from 7 in 2009 to 19 in 2010, 26 in 2011, and 29 in 2012 – four times higher in 2012 than 2009. While the numbers were limited, they have a major political impact and raise serious issues regarding the protection of military and civilian advisors in the field during 2014 onwards.² They also raise issues about the level of alienation within the ANSF, and infiltration and influence by the Taliban and other insurgents that have been met largely through unsubstantiated denials as to the scale of the problem.

² *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 34-36.

**Figure 1: OSD Assessment of Security Metrics 2011 – 2012, Year-over-Year (YoY)
Change April 1 – September 30**

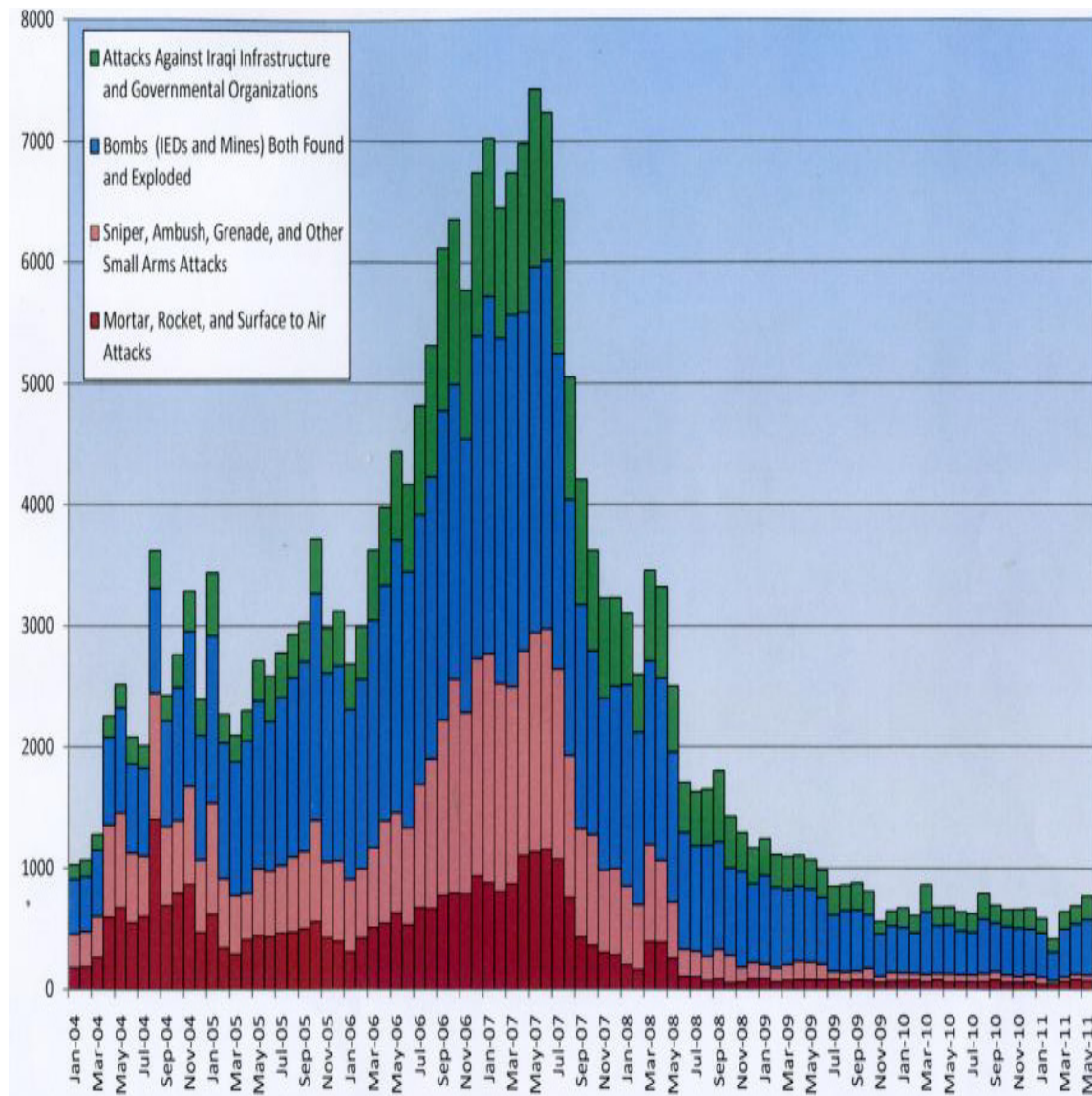
Metric	Total EIAs	High Profile Attacks	Direct Fire	Total IED Events	IED and Mine Explosions	Indirect Fire
% change from 2011 to 2012	+1%	+2%	+10%	-3%	-12%	-5%

“Metric definitions: High-profile attacks (HPA) are currently defined by ISAF as explosive hazard events, where certain executed IED attacks are taken into account. Considered are only Person-borne IED (PBIED) attacks, suicide vehicle-borne IED attacks (SVBIED), and vehicle-borne IED attacks (VBIED). Enemy Initiated direct fire occurs when effects are delivered on a target that is visible to aimer or firing unit and uses the target itself as the point of aim. Enemy Initiated indirect fire occurs when fire is delivered on a target characterized by a relatively high trajectory and where the operator typically fires from a distance beyond line-of-sight or from a position where visual contact with the target is not possible. IED and Mine Explosions occur when an IED or a Mine (which has not been stacked, altered or used in some improvised manner, which would make it an IED) event results in the partial or complete functioning of the IED or Mine. Total IED Events comprises both executed and potential IED attacks. Executed IED attacks comprise IED explosions and mine strikes, while potential or attempted IED attacks comprise IEDs and mines that were found and cleared, premature IED detonations, and IED turn-ins.”

Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 20.

Figure 2: Significant Insurgent Acts by Month: Real Progress in Iraq versus No Real Progress in Afghanistan – Part One

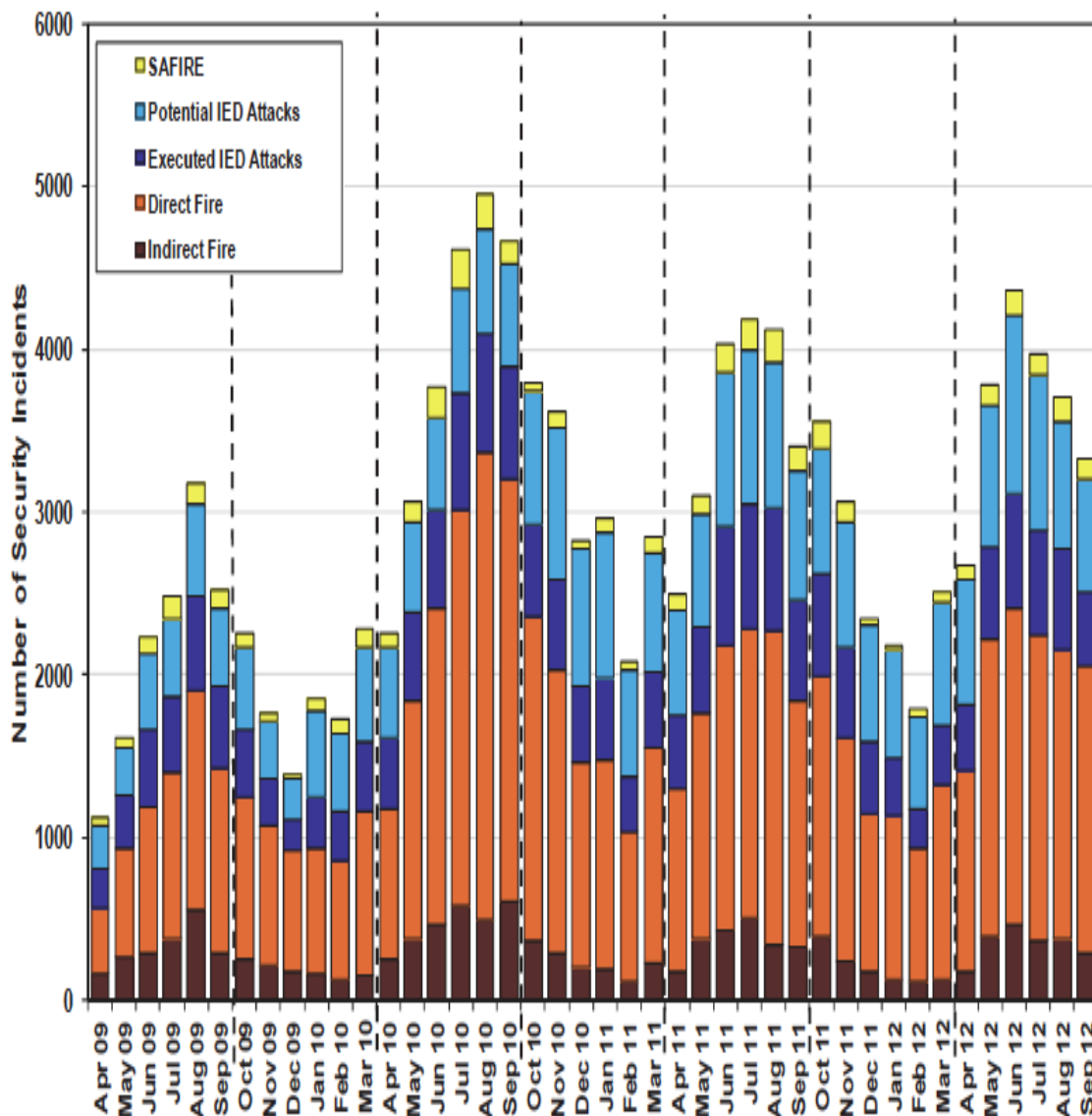
“Victory” in Iraq: MNF-I Assessment of Monthly Nationwide Security Incidents in Iraq (January 2004 to May 2011)



Source: United States Multi-National Force- Iraq, July 2011.

Figure 2: Significant Insurgent Acts by Month: Real Progress in Iraq versus No Real Progress in Afghanistan – Part Two

“Victory” in Afghanistan: OSD Assessment of Monthly Nationwide Security Incidents in Iraq (April 2009 – September 2012)

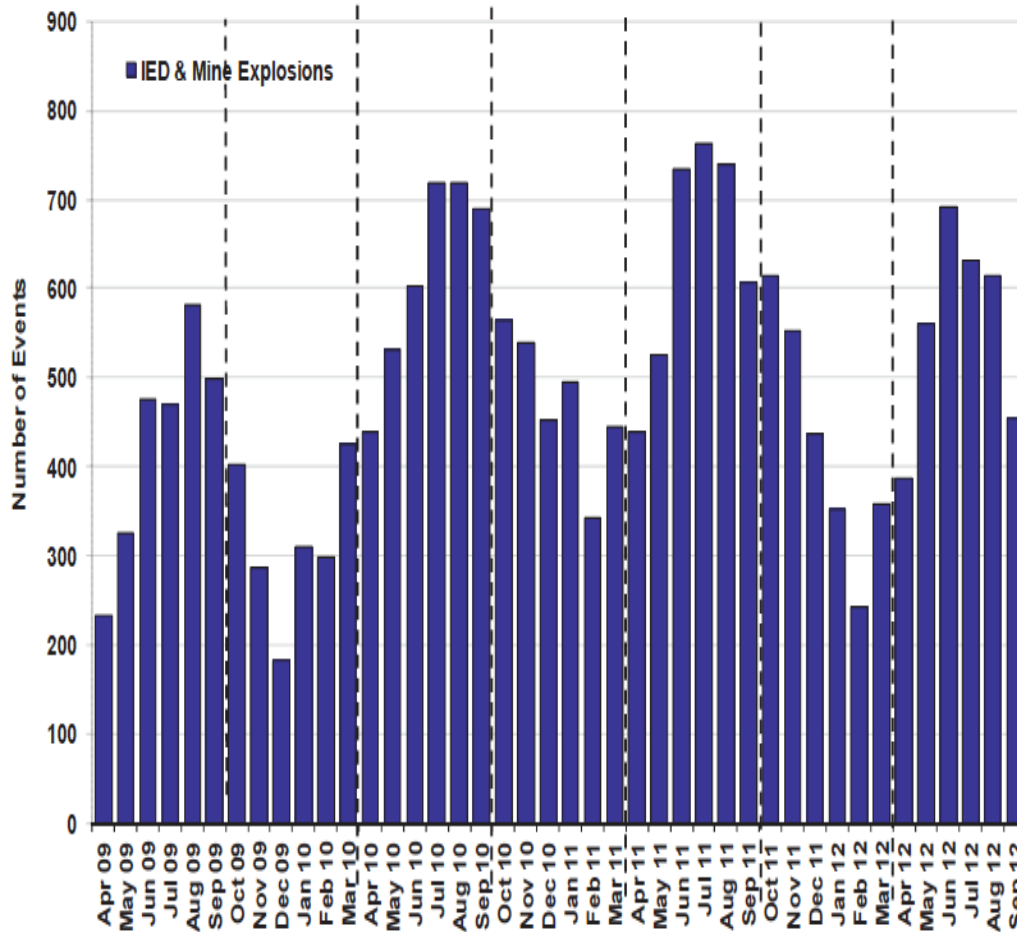


“Security incidents include direct fire, indirect fire, surface-to-air fire, and IED events. IED events include IED explosions, IEDs found and cleared, mine explosions, and mines found and cleared. The figure depicts a one percent increase in total security incidents from the corresponding reporting period one year ago. Each of the first three months of this reporting period had more security incidents than the same three months one year ago. This rise is considered the result of an earlier start of the fighting season as well as a shortened poppy harvest.”

Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 151.

Figure 3: OSD Estimates of Monthly IED and Mine Explosions (April 2009 – September 2012) Show Decrease in Numbers But UN Estimate Shows a Rise in Civilian Casualties – Part One

OSD Focuses on IED Explosions ISAF Detects, Rather Than Number of Attempts or Effect

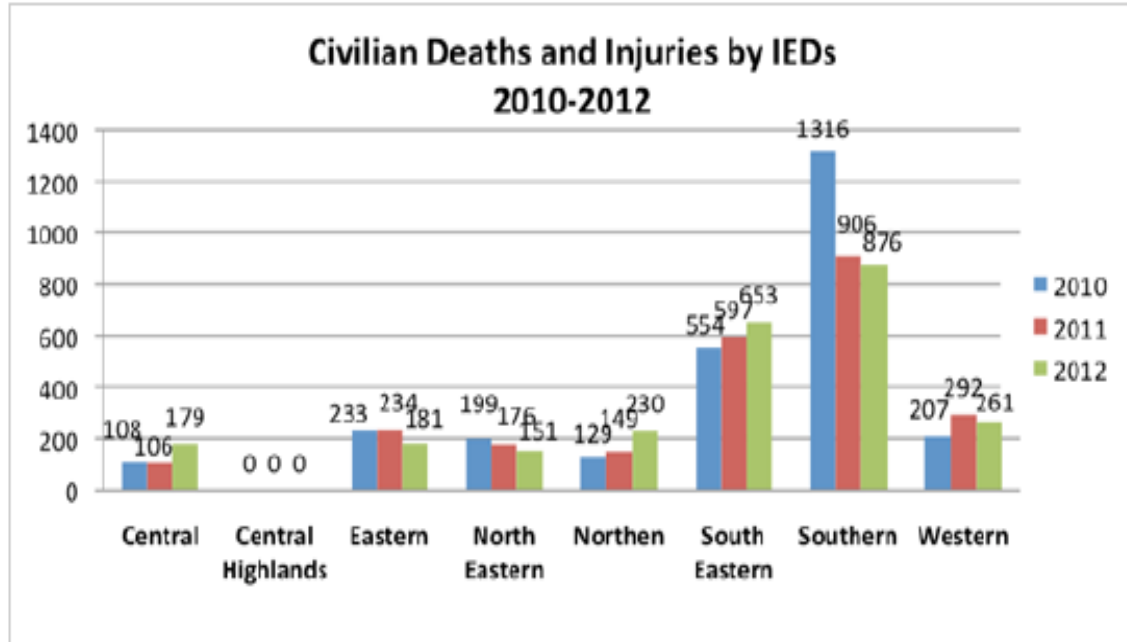


“This reporting period saw a 12 percent year-over-year decrease in IED and mine explosions, while total IED and mine activity (which includes executed and potential IED attacks) decreased three percent. Potential IED attacks include those that were found and cleared, premature IED detonations, and those turned in to the coalition by local nationals. IED turn-ins more than doubled during this period compared to one year ago.”

Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 160.

Figure 3: OSD Estimates of Monthly IED and Mine Explosions (April 2009 – September 2012) Show Decrease in Numbers But UN Estimate Shows a Rise in Civilian Casualties – Part Two

UN Estimate Focuses on Impact on Afghan Civilians and Shows Increase in Effects



“UNAMA documented 2,179 civilian deaths and 3,950 injuries (6,131 civilian casualties) caused by Anti Government Elements in 2012. This represents a one percent decrease in civilian deaths and 15 per cent increase in civilians injured, overall, an increase of nine percent in the number of civilian casualties attributed to Anti Government Elements compared to 2011. 81 percent of all civilian casualties were attributed to Antigovernment Elements in 2012 compared to 72 percent in 2011.

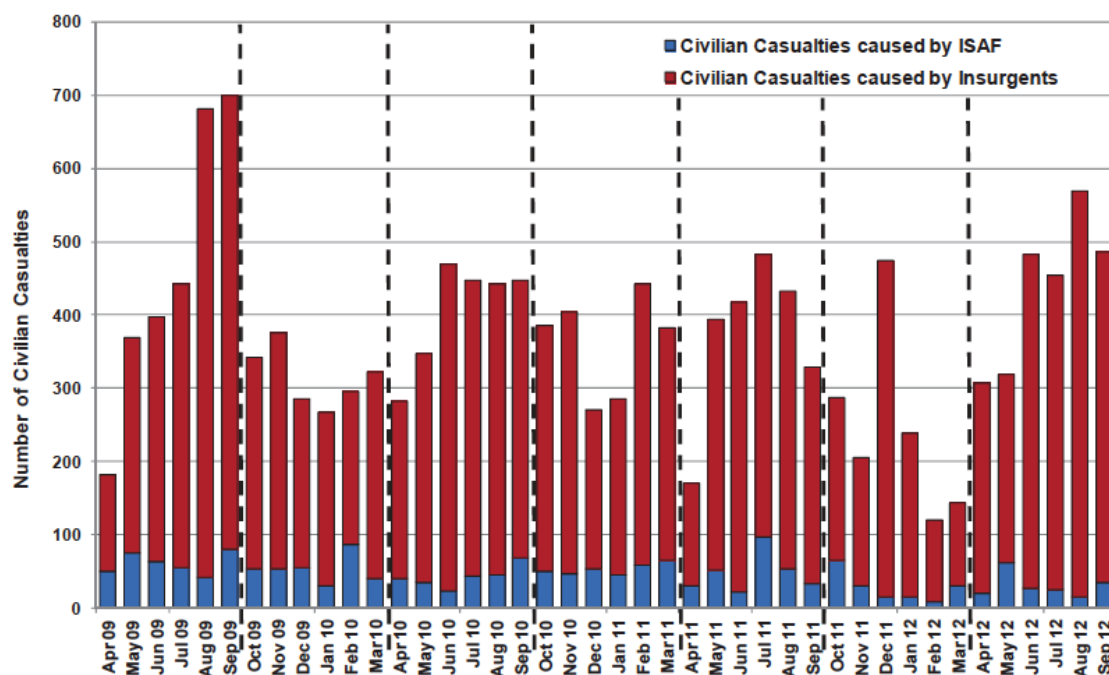
“Indiscriminate and unlawful use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by Anti Government Elements remained the biggest killer of civilians in 2012 and accounts for the majority of civilian casualties. Overall, civilian casualties from IEDs increased by three percent in 2012 compared with 2011.

“Between 1 January and 31 December 2012, UNAMA documented 782 IED incidents (more than two IEDs per day causing civilian casualties in 2012) which resulted in 2,531 civilian casualties (868 civilian deaths and 1,663 injuries) constituting 34 percent of all civilian casualties, and 38 percent of all civilian casualties attributed to Anti -Government Elements. UNAMA observed a slight increase in IED activity in the second half of the year when 62 percent of IED incidents causing civilian casualties occurred linked to an intensification of operations of Anti-Government Elements.

“UNAMA confirmed 298 incidents causing 913 civilian casualties (393 deaths and 520 injuries) from pressure plate IEDs (PPIEDs) that had been planted on roads routinely used by civilians. This is a huge increase compared to 2011 when UNAMA documented 74 killed and 67 injured by this tactic.”

Source: *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, p. 16-20 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

Figure 4: DoD Estimate of Monthly Civilian Deaths and Injuries Caused by Insurgents and ISAF (April 2009 – September 2012)



“The ISAF CCMT (Civilian Casualties Mitigation Team) methodology is based on internal and comprehensive reports provided by ISAF troops within Afghanistan, and the activation of Joint Incident Assessment Teams comprised of Afghan government representatives as well as ISAF to review evidence and conduct interviews. The amount of available information depends on ISAF involvement in the event, and therefore it is possible that ISAF statistics under-estimate CIVCAS caused by events where ISAF was not present.

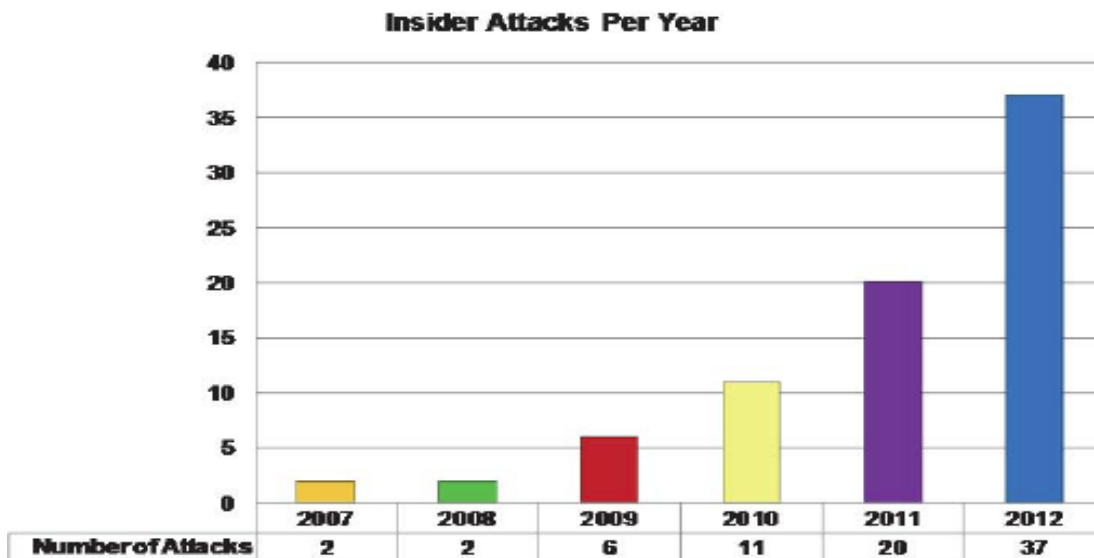
“From April through September 2012, insurgents caused approximately 90 percent of CIVCAS. Insurgents continue to rely heavily on the use of indiscriminate tactics, such as IEDs. In the reporting period, 59 percent of insurgent-caused CIVCAS were due to IEDs. ISAF has continued its efforts to find and clear IEDs prior to detonation.

“An area of great concern, however, continues to be alleged and disputed CIVCAS. Since conditions on the ground do not always permit complete battle damage assessments, insurgents have exploited opportunities to claim that those killed in ISAF-ANSF operations were innocent Afghan civilians, despite ISAF information to the contrary. The CCMT tracks alleged CIVCAS incidents as an indicator of public perception. Notably, from April-September 2012, there were a total of 187 confirmed ISAF-inflicted CIVCAS. Additionally, a total of 29 CIVCAS were alleged in the same period. ISAF investigates all alleged CIVCAS to determine responsibility and provides guidelines on consequence management.”

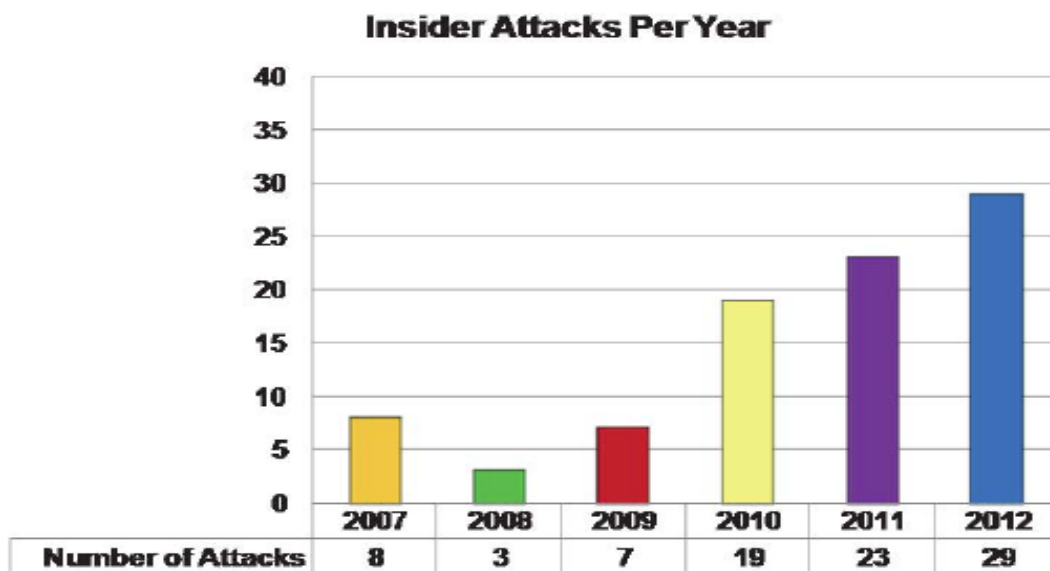
Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 33.

Figure 5: OSD Assessment of Insider Attacks

On ISAF Personnel



On ANSF Personnel



Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 34.

“Spinning” a Largely Irrelevant Metric: Enemy-Initiated Attacks or EIAs

One key lesson of the last few years is that public relations efforts that try to “spin” mixed progress in security into some form of victory do more harm than good. This is not simply a matter of transparency, trust, integrity, and credibility. It leads to a command failure to properly assess and address the nature of the enemy and to an exaggerated focus on tactical progress in what is ultimately political warfare. Falling in love with one’s own definition mission, and one’s own analytic propaganda, is not a meaningful path to success.

During much of the period after 2009, ISAF reporting – and a great deal of US reporting as well – focused on one set of criteria: EIAs during the period between 2010 and 2012. They did this initially because it presents the most favorable set of statistical trends but contains a lack of military or political meaning. However, the reporting of this metric was ceased on March 5, 2013, after it became clear there was no progress between 2011 and 2012.³

The fact is, however, that EIAs are a measureable combat activity as seen by a force under attack, and are largely irrelevant in counterinsurgency analysis. They are a symbol of “spin” that border on dishonest reporting and should never have been given more than minor attention in the first place.

Trends in EIAs revert to the same kinetic focus on tactical victories in regular combat that characterized a great deal of US and ISAF reporting before the insurgency reached the crisis level in 2008, and in ways strikingly similar to pre-Tet assessments in Vietnam. The result is reporting that focuses on the areas where US, ISAF, and the best ANA forces have a decisive tactical advantage.

Focusing on EIAs ignores the fact that groups like the Taliban are fighting a political war of attrition against US and other ISAF forces that have already largely eliminated their offensive combat capabilities but who will no longer be in the country at the end of 2014. It ignores the fact that the insurgency cannot be defeated by winning tactical clashes, making it remarkably difficult to assess either ISAF success or the challenges the ANSF face.

ISAF and Department of Defense (DoD) reporting do indicate that EIAs did drop between 2010 and 2011, but also indicate they did not drop meaningfully in 2012 and remain far higher than in 2009.⁴ This reporting also shows EIA numbers remained significant in the Kandahar and Northern Helmand River Valley in 2012, and the proportion of national EIAs in populated areas – which had declined significantly in 2010-2011 – did not decline significantly in 2011-2012.⁵

³ Spencer Ackerman, “Military Decides to Withhold Key Data on Afghan War,” *Wired*, March 6, 2013, <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2013/03/afghanistan-data/>; “Coalition To Stop Reporting Attack Data,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 6, 2013, p. 11.

⁴ *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 152-153.

⁵ *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 162-164.

A breakout of the trend in EIAs by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) is shown in **Figure 6**. It not only shows *no* significant progress when 2010 is compared to 2012, but it also shows that the insurgents kept up the pace of their attacks by shifting away from ISAF targets and focusing on ANSF and civilian targets.⁶

Figure 7 is an example of statistical nonsense but one that was apparently chosen for its public relations impact. It shows the extent (or depths) to which the data were used to try to show progress that was not occurring. It is only one of a wide range of similar charts that ISAF has issued on EIAs that have no real statistical meaning, much less serve as an adequate measure of progress in the war.

In contrast, **Figure 8** to **Figure 12** show that even if one does confine EIA reporting to combat areas and tie it to specific regions, the figures did not show anything like the progress that ISAF and US official sources reported publicly in Helmand and Kandahar in 2011 and 2012. This is particularly important because plans to carry out a similar campaign in the east have had to be severely cut back or cancelled because of US and other nations' troop cuts, and there will now be no broad effort to take back control of key areas in the east.

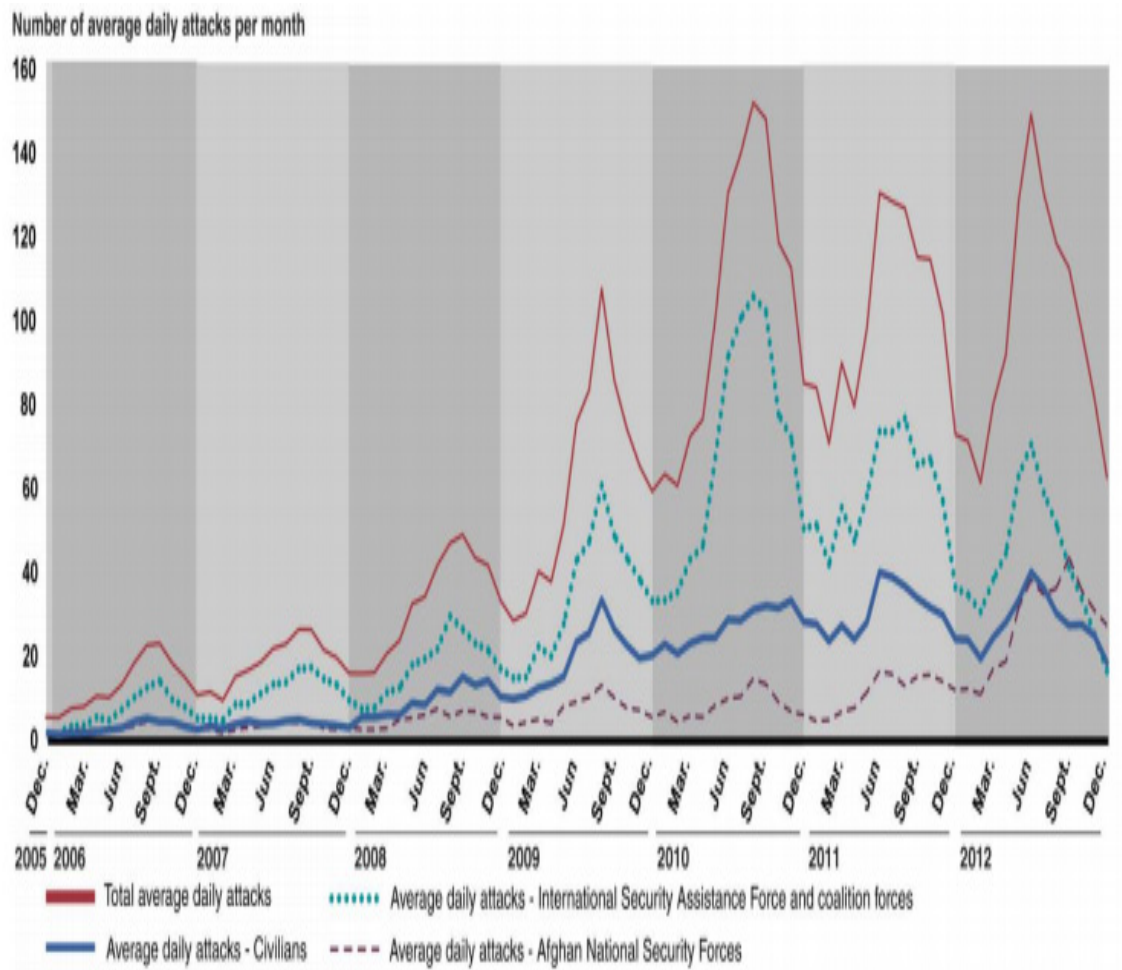
- **Figure 8** shows what appear to be positive trends in EIAs in the Helmand area – which was the key focus of the surge; however, these trends do little more than show that the insurgents stopped making attacks they know would result in major losses during the peak of the surge in 2010. This “positive” trend largely vanishes in 2011 as the insurgents focused on attacks that would give them political visibility or which they thought would produce favorable results.
- **Figure 9** shows that there were still significant acts of insurgent violence in the Helmand River Area in 2012.
- **Figure 10** shows a significant insurgent presence in the Helmand valley in 2012.
- **Figure 11** shows there were far fewer positive trends in Kandahar in EIAs during the 2010-2011 campaign, and Kandahar is a key population and economic center.
- **Figure 12** shows a significant insurgent presence remains in Kandahar.

What is even more important in terms of assessing both the current situation and the prospects for Transition, however, is that the metrics in **Figure 11** through **Figure 15** reveal a sharp set of differences between measures of tactical clashes like EIAs and maps of the areas in which the Taliban and insurgents have a presence or control. This is critical in a war where the insurgents do not have to engage ISAF and ANSF forces on unfavorable terms and have the ability to wait out ISAF and US withdrawals in order to win what is really a war of political attrition.

⁶ *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 17.

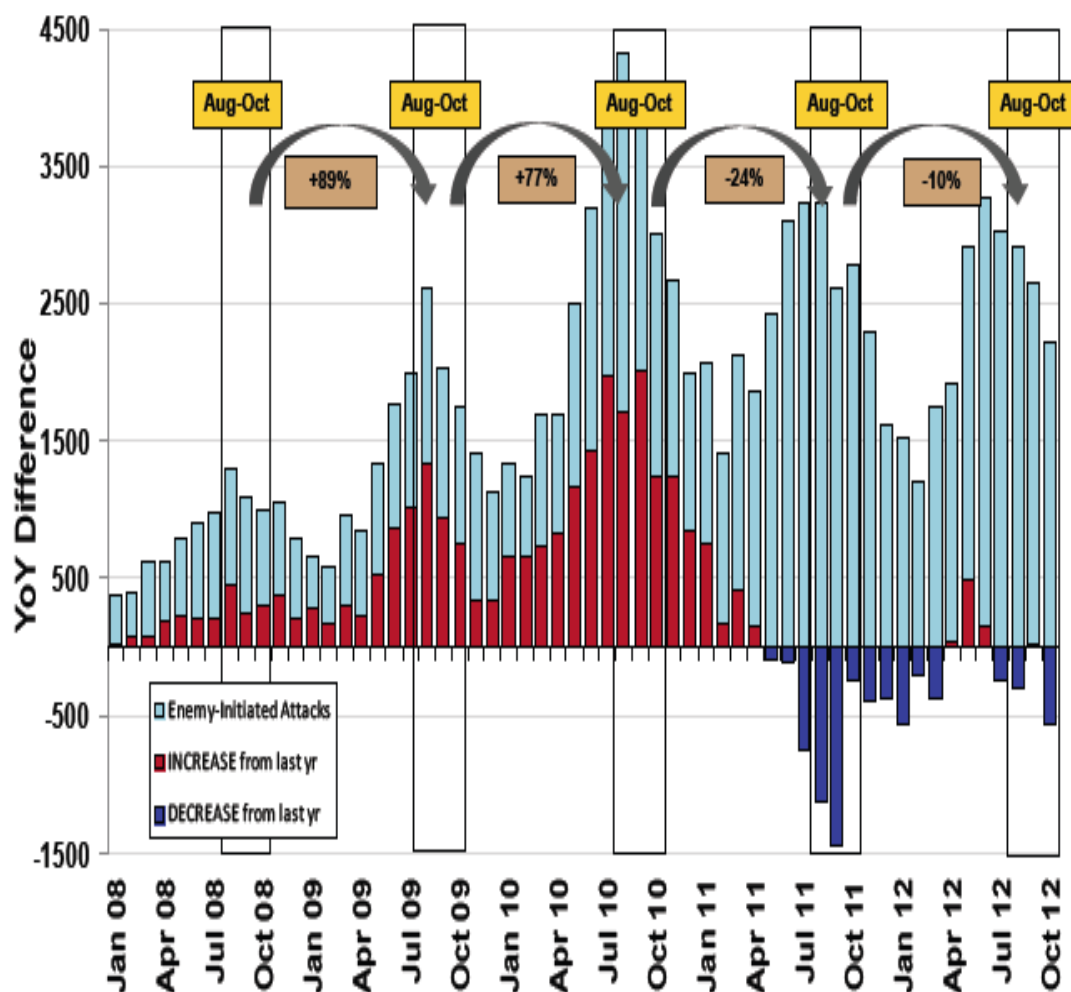
Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012 – Part One

Average Daily Enemy-Initiated Attacks Reported by Type in Afghanistan, December 2005 through December 2012



Source: *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 17.

Figure 7: ISAF Assessment of Nationwide YoY Change for Monthly Enemy-Initiated Attacks (April 2009 – October 2012)



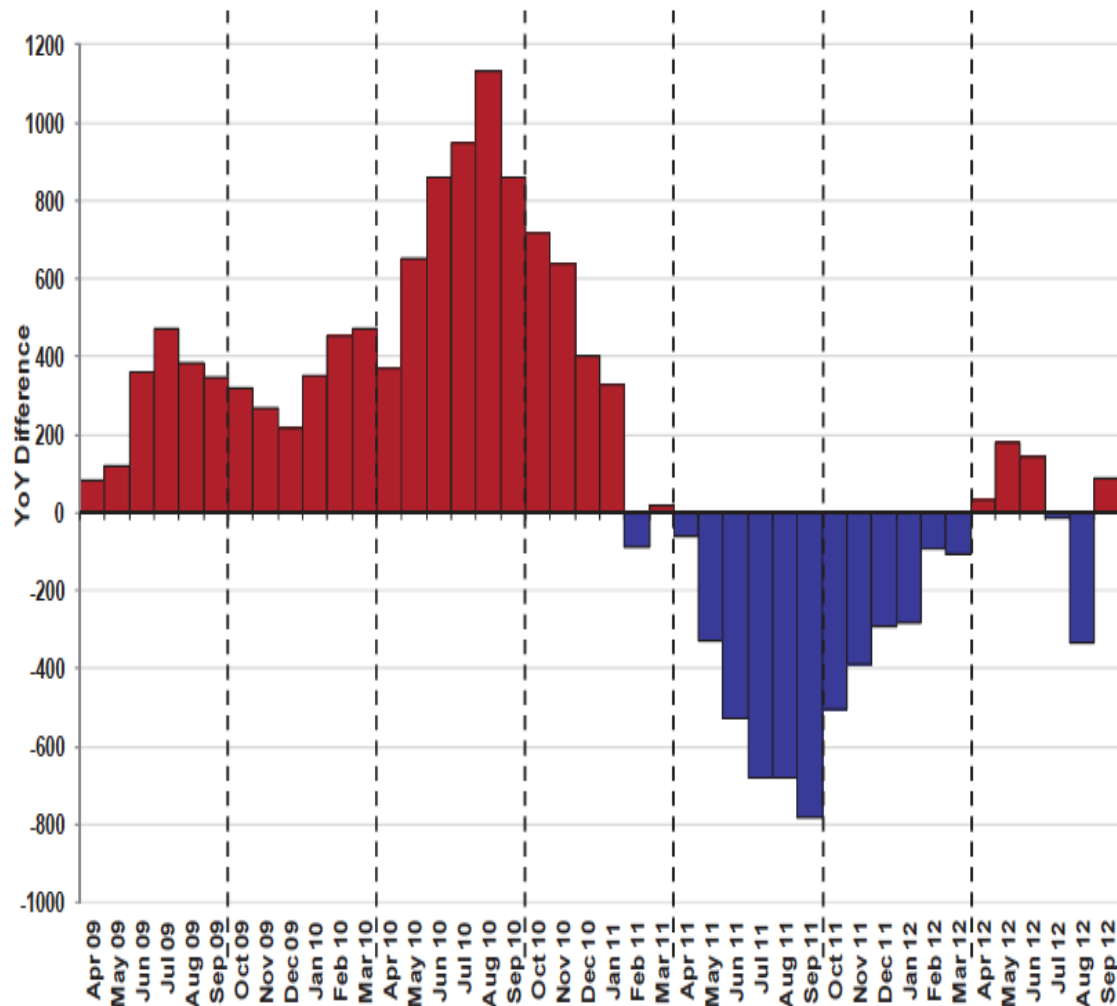
“ISAF Observations

- Enemy-initiated attacks over the last three months are 10% lower compared to the same quarter last year.
- After rising in May and June, EIAs continued to drop through October.

Definition: This chart shows the year-over-year change in enemy-initiated attacks (EIA). The total number of EIAs is shown in the background (light blue). The red bars represent an increase of monthly enemy-initiated attacks compared to the same month the year before; blue bars represent a decrease. The changes over three month periods are depicted at the top of the chart.”

Source: Afghan Mission Network (AMN) Combined Information Data Network Exchange (CIDNE) Database, as of 17 Nov 2012, p. 3. [http://www.isaf.nato.int/images/stories/File/MonthlyTrends/20121122_NIU_ISAF_Monthly_Data_Release_\(FINAL\).pdf](http://www.isaf.nato.int/images/stories/File/MonthlyTrends/20121122_NIU_ISAF_Monthly_Data_Release_(FINAL).pdf).

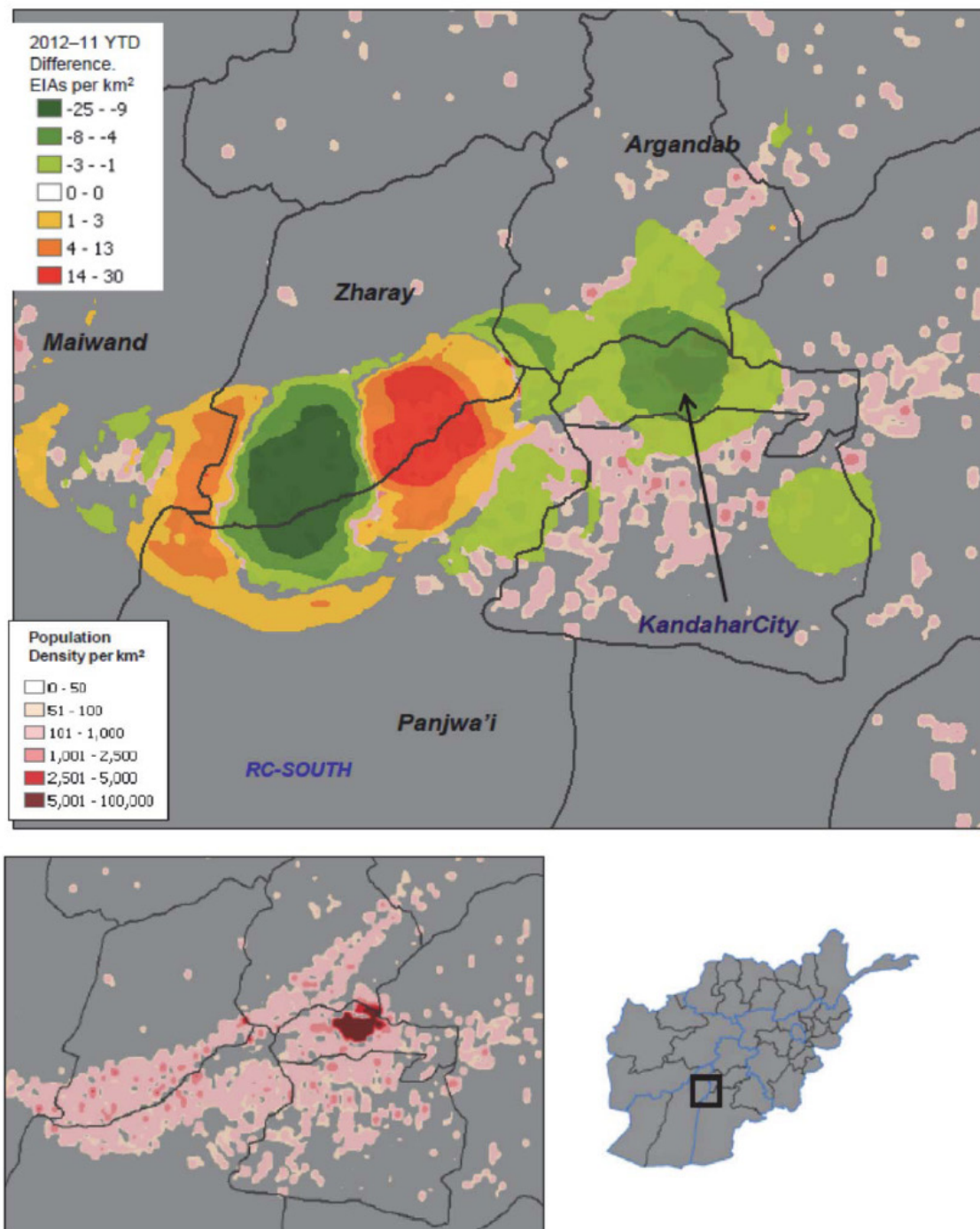
Figure 8: OSD Assessment of Monthly YoY Change in Enemy-Initiated Attacks for RC-Southwest (April 2009 – September 2012)



“RC-SW contributed 30 percent of all EIAs from April 2012 through September 2012, the same percentage compared to the corresponding period one year ago. From April 2012 through September 2012, EIAs in RC-SW increased by two percent compared to the corresponding period one year ago.”

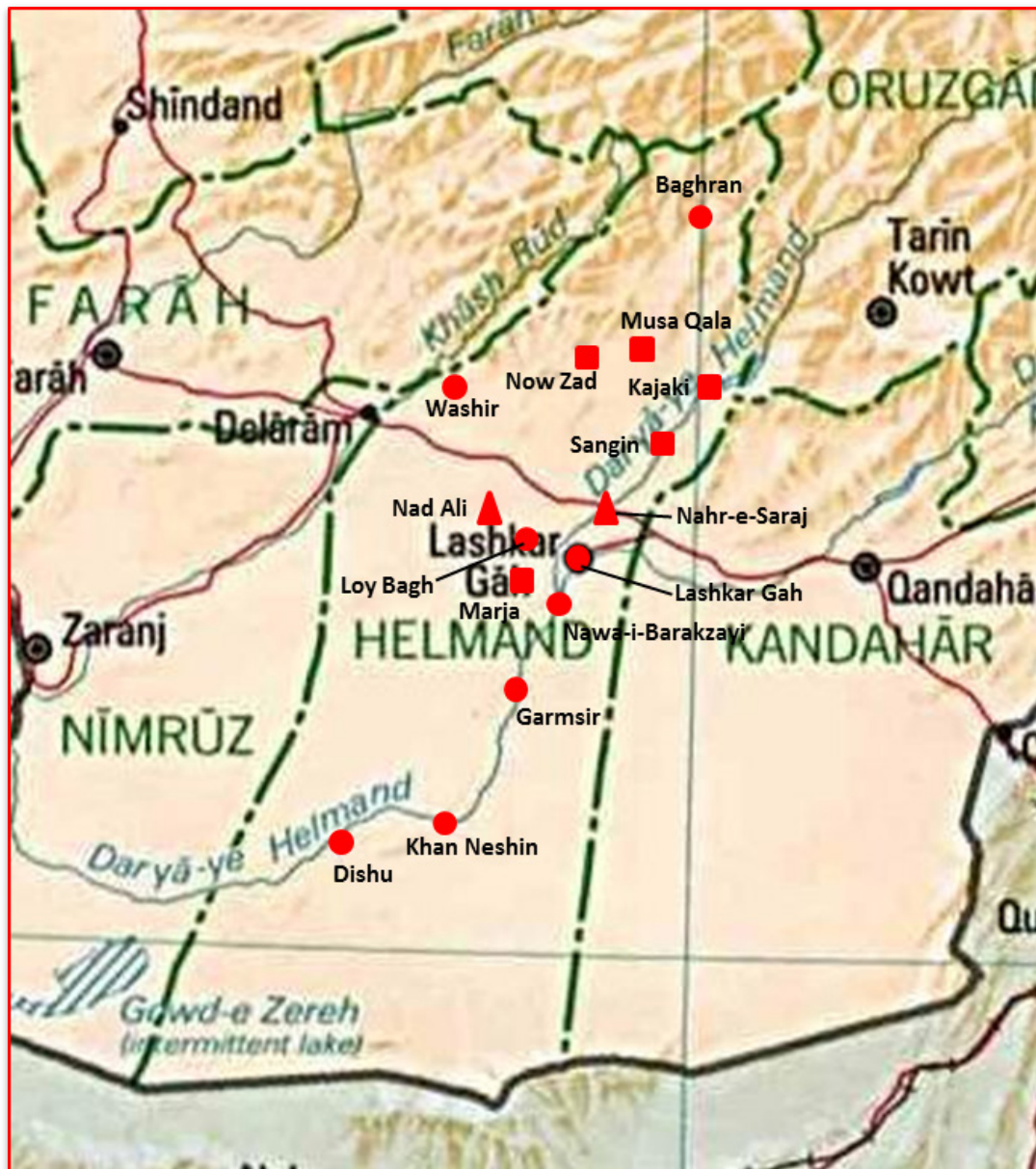
Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 153.

Figure 9: OSD Assessment of Northern Helmand River Valley Area EIA Location Changes, YoY Change, June – September 2011 vs. 2012



Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 163.

Figure 10: Violence in Helmand: January – September 2012



Map source: *Afghanistan*, Central Intelligence Agency, 1999.
<http://memory.loc.gov/gmd/gmd7/g7630/g7630/ct000716.jp2>

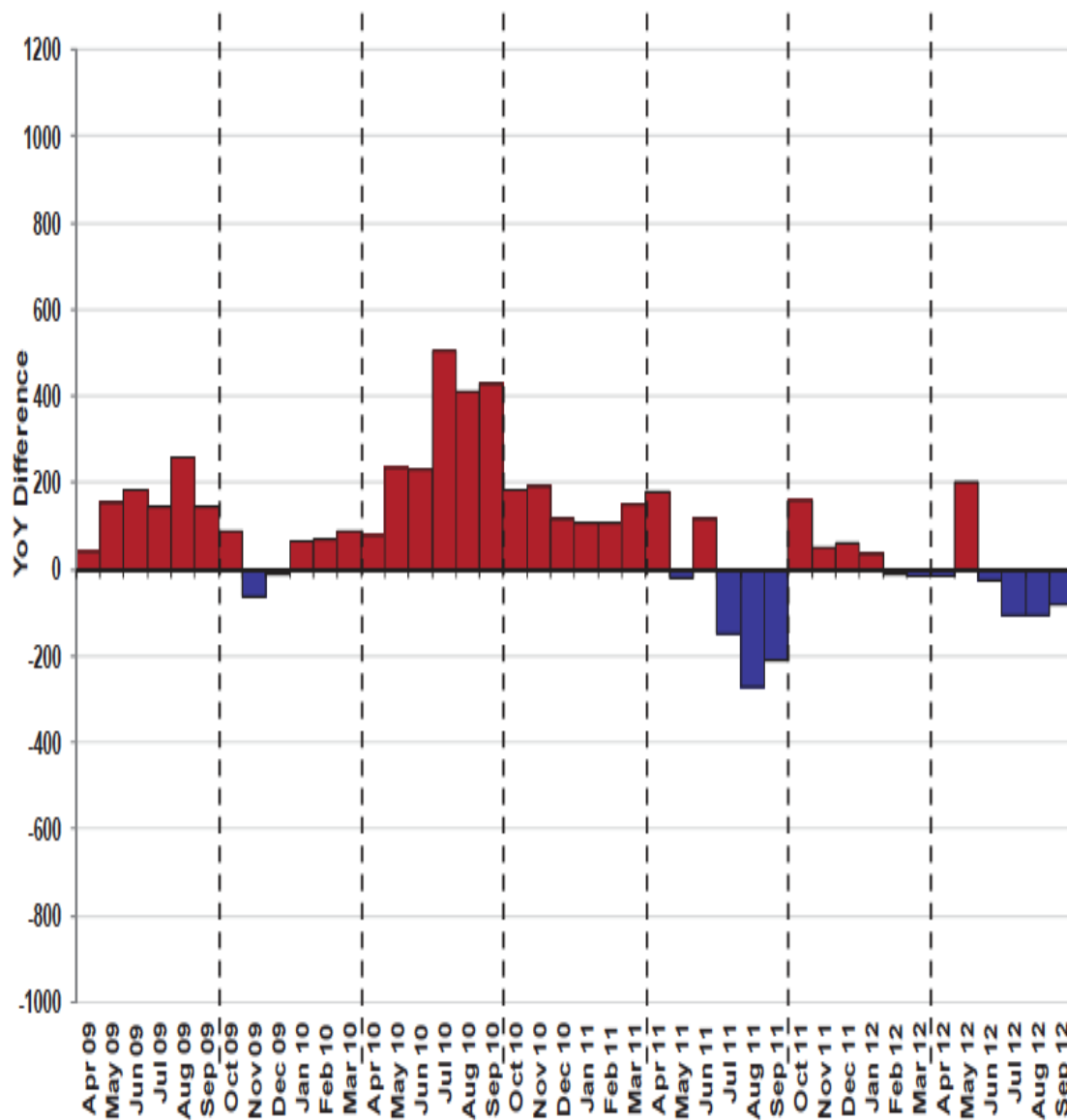
Adapted from: “Violence in Helmand,” *New York Times*, January 9, 2013.
<http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2013/01/09/world/asia/09HELMAND-map.html?ref=asia>.

Notes: Locations are approximate

Legend:

- – Less than 500 incidents of direct and indirect fire and IEDs found or exploded.
- – From 501 to 999 incidents of direct and indirect fire and IEDs found or exploded.
- ▲ – More than 1000 incidents of direct and indirect fire and IEDs found or exploded.

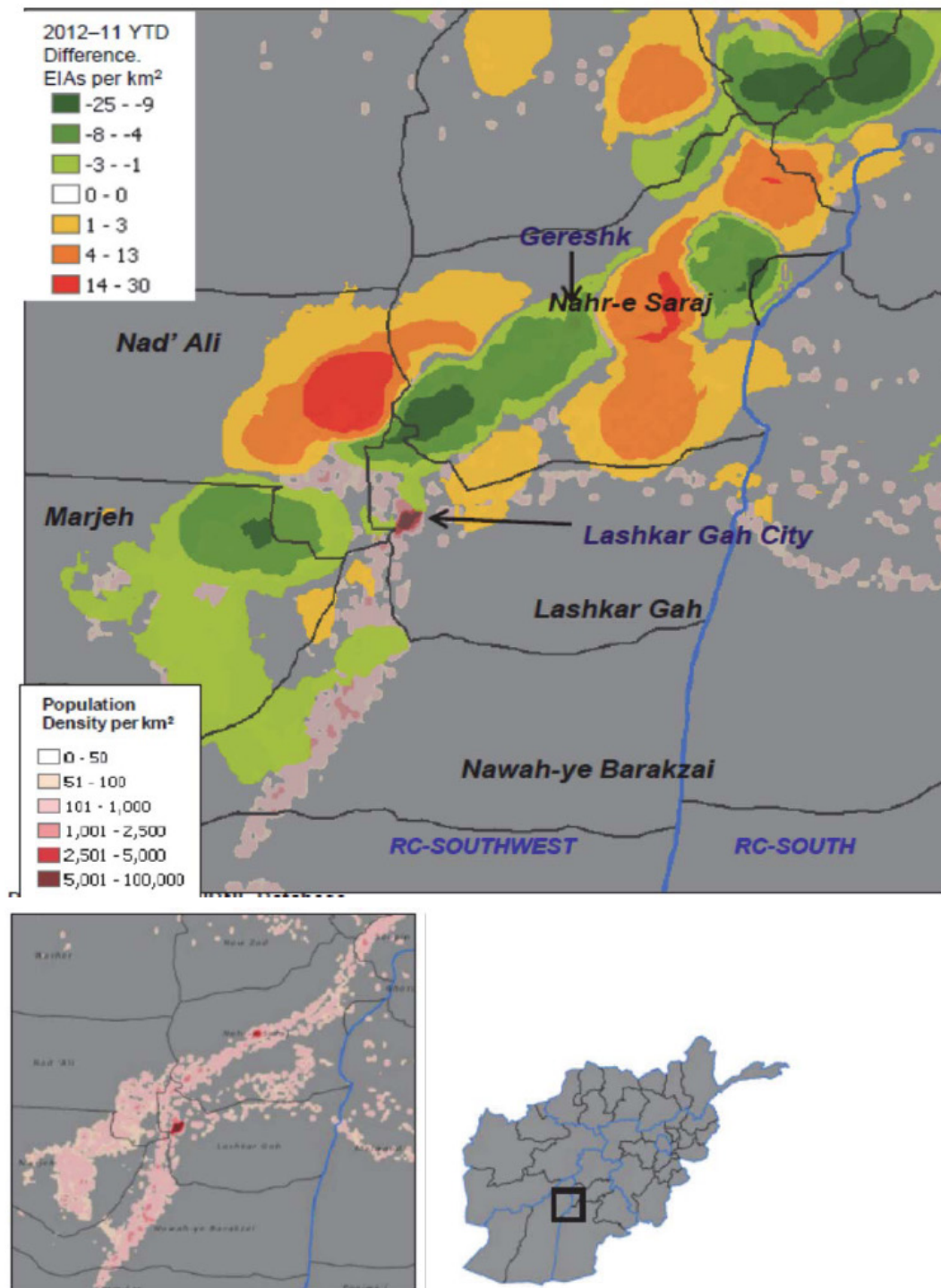
Figure 11: OSD Assessment of Monthly YoY Change in Enemy-Initiated Attacks for RC-South (April 2009 – September 2012)



“RC-S contributed 21 percent of all EIAs from April 2012 through September 2012, a decrease of one percent compared to the corresponding period one year ago. From April 2012 through September 2012, EIAs in RC-S decreased four percent compared to the corresponding period one year ago.”

Source: *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 157.

Figure 12: OSD Assessment of Kandahar EIA Location Changes, YoY Change, June – September 2011 vs. 2012



Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 162.

Lies by Omission? Dropping the Metrics That May Be Less Favorable But Also Could Reflect Actual ANSF Performance

What may be even more significant than the misuses of EIA data, however, is that ISAF and US reporting like DoD's 1230 Report – the one major official US report on the course of the war where the State Department and US Agency for International Development (USAID) have never produced a single meaningful analysis of their role in the conflict – has quietly dropped virtually every metric that shows progress in substantive terms. Maps showing progress in governance and security by province and district have been deleted, as have maps showing perceptions of progress in aid.

All references and maps relating to the original campaign plan are gone, along with any reference to progress in the Populated 81 Critical Districts of Interest and more than 40 additional Districts of Interest that were the focus of ISAF objectives in 2009 through early 2011. All references to an active campaign in eastern Afghanistan and to second efforts in the center and north have also been dropped.

No effort is made to assess the growing impact of criminal narcotics or the resurgence of narcotics growing in insurgent areas in the south during 2011-2012. Moreover, no attempt is now made to provide unclassified maps of the areas of insurgent influence, and show how they relate to the areas of ANSF influence or control. There is no picture of where the Afghan government now actually exerts meaningful governance outside “Kabulstan,” has a functioning justice system, and the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) actually maintain security. No one discusses the scale of insurgent ratlines; shadow governments; checkpoints and local activity; or lower – but critical – levels of violence like threats, extortion, kidnappings, and individual killings.

Here it is interesting to look at an independent assessment of the challenge the ANSF now faces and the overall security situation in Afghanistan. The Afghan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) is an NGO organization with a well-established history of making security assessments based on NGO perceptions of violence. It has its own biases and obviously does not have the collection capabilities of a government or ISAF.

Figure 13 is still useful, however, in showing that ANSO has a different perception of the current security situation than ISAF. Where ISAF tends to focus on the worse kinetic cases, ANSO sees risk in terms of any significant volume of attacks – a measurement that may provide a clearer picture of what Afghanistan could be like after US and other ISAF troops leave.⁷

⁷ *Quarterly Data Report: Q4*, Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 2012, p. 15.
<http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>

Figure 13: Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012



Adapted from: *Quarterly Data Report: Q4*, Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 2012, p. 16.
<http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>.

Map: "Afghanistan Administrative Map," Central Intelligence Agency, 2009.
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/cia-maps-publications/map-downloads/afghanistan-admin.jpg>.

Real-World Trends in the Fighting in Helmand and Kandahar During the Peak of the Surge

The success of the Obama Administration's surge has been debatable, though there has been progress:

Prior to the surge, the Karzai government was estimated to control about 30% of the country, while insurgents controlled 4% (13 out of 364 districts). Insurgents "influenced" or "operated in" another 30% (Afghan Interior Ministry estimates in August 2009). Tribes and local groups with varying degrees of loyalty to the central government controlled the remainder. Some outside groups report higher percentages of insurgent control or influence. The Taliban had named "shadow governors" in 33 out of 34 of Afghanistan's provinces, although many provinces in northern Afghanistan were assessed as having minimal Taliban presence.⁸

Searching for Metrics That Really Matter in a War of Political Attrition⁹

Metrics are only quantified adjectives and are only relevant if they are coupled to narratives that do not focus on national total or other meaningless aggregates and describe the war that is actually being fought. Even if the counts of EIAs had been accurate and credible, the Taliban, Haqqani Network, and other insurgents had little reason to directly challenge the far superior ISAF forces or the best ANSF forces. Rather than attempt to win tactical battles, these groups can wait out the departure of most ISAF forces, concentrate on building influence, carry out politically high-profile attacks designed to accelerate ISAF's withdrawal, intimidate Afghans, and focus on softer Afghan government and ANSF targets.

More broadly, NATO/ISAF and ANSF tactical victories are scarcely irrelevant. But, reports of tactical "victories" are not a substitute for a net assessment of the relative political and military strength of the Taliban and other insurgent networks relative to the political and military strength of the Afghan central government.

The test of victory or relative progress in the type of insurgency that exists in Afghanistan has rarely been which side wins the most tactical encounters or trends in the current outcome of clashes with regular regime military forces. It has rather been the overall ability to take control of populations and areas over time, to defeat the ability of the regime to govern and hold a given amount of space, to deny the regime popular support and income, to exploit local tensions and internal divisions within the population, and to deprive the regime of outside funds and military support.

Ever since the US first announced withdrawal in 2014, insurgent groups have had reason to fight a political war, not a kinetic one. This will be the war the ANSF will have to fight after the US and ISAF essentially end major combat action following the 2013 campaign season.

⁸ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service 7-5700, January 4, 2013, p. 25.

⁹ The "spin," lack of transparency, and lack of integrity in some reporting is analyzed in detail in other Burke Chair reports on the CSIS website. See *The War In Afghanistan at the End of 2012: The Uncertain Course of the War and Transition*, <http://csis.org/publication/war-afghanistan-end-2012-uncertain-course-war-and-transition>; *Afghanistan: The Failed Metrics of Ten Years of War*, February 9, 2012, <http://csis.org/publication/afghanistan-failed-metrics-ten-years-war>; and *Back to the "Body Count": The Lack of Reliable Data on the Wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan*, September 10, 2012.

The Taliban and other insurgents know that history shows there is no easy way to assess progress in counterinsurgency or to distinguish victory from defeat until the outcome of a conflict is final. Time and again, “defeated” insurgent movements have emerged as the victors in spite of repeated tactical defeats. The Chinese Communist victory over the Kuomintang, the Cuban revolution, the Vietnam War, and Nepal are all cases in point. The insurgents can lose virtually every formal battle or tactical encounter and still win at the end of a struggle, emerging as the political victors. They do not have to fight tactical or conventional wars; they can fight battles of political attrition – often winning against unpopular and incompetent regimes.

They know there are cases where the insurgents do eventually have to make the transition to becoming regular forces and defeat the regime’s forces in tactical combat. They also know, however, that this is only one route to victory. They can win if the regime loses sufficient popular support or if it fails to govern properly and control space – particularly in heavily populated areas. They can win if major factions desert the regime without joining the insurgents, if the government cannot afford to sustain the conflict, or if it loses a critical source of outside support.

This makes the many weaknesses in the Karzai government and in the structure of the Afghan government critical liabilities that aid the insurgents. The same is true of the fact that there is no current threat to the insurgent sanctuaries in Pakistan or likelihood that Pakistan will change the ambiguous role it has played throughout the war.

Furthermore, these liabilities are reinforced by the fact that the insurgents know that most US forces and almost all allied forces will be gone by the end of 2014 and that outside popular support for the war and continued aid is now negative and declining in every major ISAF country. Their prospects of a political-military victory are reinforced by ongoing cuts in US forces and those of many key allies as well as by the widespread corruption and abuses of many elements of the Afghan government – including most of the police.

Impact of Civilian Casualties on Afghan Transition

Insurgencies are complex mixes of political, economic, and tactical warfare. They almost invariably are fought differently in different parts of the country – urban and rural areas – and along internal fractures lines like ethnicity, sect, and tribe. National averages disguise as much as they reveal and often bury the most important trends in data that do not reflect key developments in combat.

The politics and economics of the fight are as important as the tactical military outcome but far harder to measure in quantified terms. Host governments are usually weak, divided, ineffective, and often deeply corrupt. They are as much the “enemy” in serious insurgencies as the insurgents, and any net assessment of the trends in the fighting that does not focus as much on the weaknesses of the host government and forces as on the insurgents is little more than analytic rubbish.

This need to deal with every key dimension of complex warfare means there are no magic statistical or narrative ways to make assessments of factors like political influence. Reporting must be complex and focused on key dimensions of warfare rather than some form of nation-wide trends or summary metrics. Moreover, when metrics are used, they

must seek to accurately count all insurgent activity – in particular, low-level attacks, threats, and extortion.

Insurgent violence against Afghan civilians is one way to illustrate the need to make such assessments, to show how the fighting impacts on the people, and indicate how Afghans perceive security in ways the (sometimes biased and self-serving) surveys may not reveal.

According to a UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) report “Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict,” the numbers of civilian casualties (both dead and injured) has risen. The UNAMA estimates are impossibly precise and disguise serious levels of uncertainty. However, **Figure 14** and **Figure 15** are in all likelihood broadly correct in showing trends. UNAMA estimated that the number of civilians killed went down to 2,754 in 2012 relative to a total of 3,131 in 2011, but the total number of casualties caused by insurgent activity continued to increase.¹⁰

In 2012, UNAMA estimates that there were 7,559 civilian casualties (incorporating both deaths and injuries). It estimates that 6,131 (81% of the total) casualties were caused by insurgents and other anti-government forces, 587 (8%) casualties caused by the ANSF and other pro-government forces, and the remaining 841 (11%) casualties could not be attributed to one specific actor or group.¹¹ The majority of casualties, 2,531, were attributed to anti-government improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and 1,077 casualties resulted from targeted killings of civilians perceived to be supporting the government, government officials, and those supporting the peace process.¹²

According to the report, the protection of civilians in ANSF operations is mixed. While ANSF operations have led to lower civilian deaths during both search operations (75 casualties) and engagements between insurgents and ANSF forces (1,618 casualties), increases in civilian casualties occurred in the central and central highlands, the northeast, and north and west regions.¹³ However, the report states that this may be due to the increased operations of both insurgent groups and ANSF forces in those areas.

The report provides further details on civilian casualties and the operations of the ANSF:

- “The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) documented 7,559 civilian casualties (2,754 civilian deaths and 4,805 injuries) from armed conflict in 2012. While these numbers reflect a 12 percent reduction in civilian deaths and a minimal increase in civilians injured compared to 2011.” (p. 1)
- “Over the past six years, 14,728 Afghan civilians have lost their lives in the armed conflict.” (p. 1)
- “UNAMA documented 6,131 civilian casualties (2,179 civilian deaths and 3,952 injuries) by Anti-Government Elements in 2012, an increase of nine percent compared to 2011. 81 percent of the total civilian casualties in 2012 were attributed to Anti-Government Elements.” (p. 1)
- “...UNAMA recorded a 108 percent increase in civilian casualties from targeted killings and a rise in casualties from the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs)...” (p. 2)
- “Eight percent of all civilian casualties or 587 civilian casualties (316 deaths and 271 injuries) were attributed to Pro-Government Forces in 2012, a 46 percent decrease...” (p. 2)

¹⁰ *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, p. 2-3 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2. (reprinted with permission).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 2-3 (reprinted with permission).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7 (reprinted with the permission).

- "...recorded 1,077 civilian casualties (698 civilians killed and 379 injured) from targeted killings, a 108 percent increase from 2011. Many of these casualties resulted from the intentional targeting of civilians perceived to be supporting the Government, including Government officials, religious leaders, tribal elders, off-duty police officers and persons supporting the peace process. Of these 1,077 civilian casualties, targeted killings and injuries of Government civilian employees increased by a staggering 700 percent." (p. 4)
- "UNAMA recorded 587 civilian casualties (316 deaths and 271 injured) attributed to Pro-Government Forces, representing a 46 percent decrease in total civilian casualties from 2011. UNAMA attributed eight percent of all civilian casualties to Pro-Government Forces." (p. 6)
- "Aerial operations caused 27 percent of all civilian deaths attributed to Pro-Government Forces and three percent of all civilian casualties." (p. 6)
- "UNAMA monitoring of the Afghan Local Police Program (ALP) saw mixed reports on the conduct of ALP and the program's impact on civilian protection. The majority of communities reported improvement in the security environment in those areas with ALP presence which coincided with expansion of ALP throughout Afghanistan in 2012... In several districts UNAMA continued to document serious human rights violations and received reports of inconsistent compliance with policies guiding the ALP recruitment and vetting process." (p. 9)
- "In 2012, UNAMA documented 1,507 civilian casualties (328 killed and 1,179 injured) from 73 incidents of suicide and complex attacks (compared with 90 incidents in 2011 which resulted in 1,653 civilian casualties)." (p. 20-21)
- "Civilian casualties from ANSF offensive operations and defensive actions increased in 2012. The majority occurred during ground engagements against insurgents, usually following an attack against an ANSF check-post or convoy. 33 civilian deaths and 63 injuries were documented consistent with figures for 2011 with almost all incidents also occurring during ground engagements." (p. 37)
- "A permanent structure does not exist within the ANA or ANP however to systematically investigate allegations of civilian casualties. The investigation of a civilian casualty incident is triggered through a complaint by a victim or witness or suspicion by ANA or ANP legal officers or commanders of a breach of domestic law or international humanitarian law." (p. 38)
- "As of 10 January 2013, ISAF Special Forces and the Ministry of Interior had re-vetted 12,520 ALP members. Of those re-vetted, 142 ALP (one percent) were dismissed while others quit or abandoned their post, bringing the overall reduction in numbers of ALP members from the re-vetting process to six percent." (p. 43)
- "In 2012, UNAMA documented 55 incidents attributed to ALP, resulting in 62 civilian casualties (24 civilian deaths and 38 injuries). Thirteen of the civilian casualty incidents took place during ground engagements, while the majority of civilian casualties arose from human rights violations committed by ALP members." (p. 43)
- "...with most cases of serious human rights violations committed by ALP to date, investigations and/or criminal proceedings were initiated only after intervention by the ALP Directorate in Kabul and, in some cases, after pressure from human rights groups. This suggests that district level oversight and accountability mechanisms have not developed to sufficient capacity." (p. 45)
- "UNAMA documented 1,302 casualties of Afghan boys and girls (488 deaths and 814 injured) in 2012, representing a slight decrease over 2011. Child casualties resulted from all tactics, with the majority of children suffering harm through IEDs and ground engagement. Anti-Government Elements caused 788 of the total child casualties (283 deaths and 505 injuries). Pro-Government Forces were responsible for 174 child casualties with 90 deaths and 84 injuries. 340 child casualties were unattributed." (p. 54)

Furthermore, drone strikes have been steadily increasing over the past several years. In 2011, 5% of US air attacks in Afghanistan were drone strikes; the figure rose to 12% in

2012. This is a 72% increase in drone strikes, with a total of 506 in 2012. As for civilian casualties from drone strikes, it appears that there is conflicting totals. UMAMA reports 16 civilian deaths and 3 injuries from strikes in 2012, up from 1 “incident” in 2011.

Targeted Killings

Figure 16 ties such casualties even more to insurgency and political warfare. It shows that targeted killings of Afghan officials and forces steadily increase as the insurgents shifted away from pointless clashes with departing US and allied forces, and focused on a key post-2014 objective: Weakening the Afghan government and the ANSF.

The Importance of the Narrative

No metrics, however, will ever be a substitute for a matching narrative, any more than a narrative can substitute for an effort to quantify, map, poll, and measure effectiveness and trends. This is all too clear from an assessment that experts provided during the author’s March 2013 visit to Afghanistan, of the progress in meeting the insurgent threat by:¹⁴

...The Taliban attempted, but failed, to reverse ISAF operational gains in 2012. Comparative analysis of pre-surge and post-surge reflects an enemy less capable, less popular, less cohesive, less of an existential threat to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), and struggling to recapture lost key terrain.

- The Taliban failed at regaining control or influence in lost areas. Insurgent access to Kandahar City continues to decline despite significant Taliban efforts to conduct attacks.
- Enemy-initiated violence country-wide is slightly lower than in 2011 and has been forced into less populated areas.
- ANSF conducted more operations in 2012 than in any previous year and experienced higher casualties; however, the ANSF remains resilient with insurgents increasingly seeing ANSF as a threat.
- The number of insider attacks grew in 2012, with the Taliban receiving much attention and credit. These incidents involved less than 0.01% of the ANSF and while direct Taliban involvement remains unclear, they continue to encourage ANSF defections and will take credit for future insider attacks.
- The enemy continued prioritizing attacks against Afghan Local Police (ALP); however, ALP largely held fast, successfully defending over 75% of insurgent attacks and continues to disrupt insurgent operations.
- Anti-Taliban uprisings, despite their localized nature and limited scope, sparked a national, Afghan media-led dialogue about resisting the Taliban.

The Afghan government and ANSF-with ISAF support-made security gains across population centers and, to a lesser extent, improved security along major supply routes (MSRs).

- Security in Regional Command (RC) South continues to improve, although the enemy contests remote and sparsely populated areas, particularly in Kandahar’s Panjawa’i, Maiwand and Zharay districts, as well as Zabul and Uruzgan provinces.
- RC Southwest remains stable with significantly improved security from 2009, although the Taliban retains some control and influence.

¹⁴ Primary author’s trip to Afghanistan.

- RC East, with some limited surge reinforcement, experienced declining security in some isolated areas and insufficient progress in others, as Logar, Wardak, and Ghazni provinces require continued attention.
- RC North security continued improving as insurgents failed to expand beyond isolated Pashtun pockets or provoke overt ethnic conflict.
- RC West has seen limited security declines in localized areas with Pashtun populations. Herat Province remains secure and is thriving.

...Despite ANSF and ISAF progress, the enemy is not yet defeated. GIRoA and its international partners face a series of challenges over the next few years due to the insurgency's high resiliency.

- Pakistani sanctuary and support will continue fueling the insurgency until Islamabad changes its strategic calculus.
- The Taliban will continue skillfully using the media to manipulate Afghan and International Community perceptions, reduce support for GIRoA, exaggerate Taliban military capabilities, and portray itself as moderate to create the perception of its inevitable return to power.
- Security challenges along Highway 1 are moving from the near environs of Kabul, Kandahar City, and central Helmand to more remote and sparsely populated areas. Freedom of movement remains important to ISAF and GIRoA, but less so in remote areas which have rarely been entirely secured.

Taliban Strengths and Weaknesses

Experts provided more details during a March 2013 visit to Afghanistan, and their narrative not only reflect far more convincing progress than metrics on EIAs but puts the strengths and weaknesses of the Taliban and other insurgents in a perspective that makes a good case for ISAF's emphasis on layered defense:

...The Taliban-led insurgency's strengths and weaknesses are not mutually exclusive. Much insurgent strengths also have inherent vulnerabilities that can be exploited, albeit some are more difficult to exploit than others. For example, the insurgency undoubtedly benefits from its Pakistani sanctuary with a robust resource network, and seemingly endless pool of recruits.

...**Pakistan Sanctuary.** As long as Islamabad continues to view the Taliban and Haqqani Network as levers of influence, they will unapologetically provide sanctuary, ensuring continued enemy capacity to absorb losses of personnel and resources. Poor border security and lack of cross-border cooperation allows insurgents to transport fighters, weapons, explosives, and money into Afghanistan with ease. However, the potential vulnerabilities associated with insurgent reliance on Pakistan sanctuary have gone largely unexploited. Afghan insurgent groups realize public association with Pakistan reinforces existing perceptions that the Taliban are proxies of Pakistan's foreign policy. The Taliban repeatedly deny their dependency upon Pakistan sanctuary, which underscores their concern and highlights a vulnerability.

...**Taliban Dominate Strategic Messaging.** Taliban senior leaders effectively use propaganda, softer rhetoric, and increased international engagement to project the movement as a legitimate political entity and government-in-exile. The Taliban is not hamstrung by the truth or held accountable, which provides flexibility to dominate the information environment. The Taliban have repeatedly stated that propaganda is a key component of their overarching strategy. Examples include filming attacks, making video diaries of suicide bombers, and having insurgent spokesmen quickly disseminate information to media outlets to ensure they are first with the story.

...An example of the Taliban's successful strategic messaging is their effective international outreach and efforts to build perceptions of moderated social policies. However, we assess this rhetoric only represents one minority segment of the movement. Judging from interviews, propaganda and media statements, the Taliban's political outreach and moderation remain debated

issues among Pakistan-based Taliban senior leaders. These concepts likely remain unsocialized and misunderstood among the majority of Afghanistan-based Taliban.

...**Command and Control.** Elements of the Taliban's command and control reflect an organizational structure that is increasing in complexity. The Taliban continues to expand its leadership commissions, assigning leaders and administrators to specific roles and responsibilities. The Taliban Outreach Commission now formally serves as the Taliban's response to GIRoA's reintegration program, targeting vulnerable ANSF and GIRoA members. To avoid effective targeting operations, the Taliban's most senior leaders and the provincial level shadow governors remain in the safety of Pakistan sanctuary. While this ensures individual protection, it has also created a physical and psychological divide with subordinate and local commanders who we assess drive the insurgency's tactical efforts. Local commanders individually interpret and disseminate guidance which is often at odds with strategic guidance.

The Taliban code of conduct specifically calls for fair treatment and protection of the population whenever possible; however, civilian casualties continue.

...**Less Cohesive Taliban.** The Taliban portrays itself as a unified and monolithic nationwide resistance movement. The Taliban's concern over internal cohesion is frequently demonstrated by the repetition of its 'unity' propaganda theme. Despite this, many fault lines exist within the Taliban's own ranks and among competing insurgent organizations not under the Taliban umbrella. We assess the present conflict has provided a common enemy and goal that supersedes these differences and keeps many fault lines dormant. While there have been numerous examples of senior Taliban friction, the frequency and intensity of the friction in 2012 surpassed previous years.

...**Pragmatic Taliban, Hardline Taliban.** Perhaps the greatest threat to the Taliban's cohesiveness and unity is the separation between hard-line and pragmatic elements. A small, pragmatic minority of Taliban leaders appears to be more progressive, understand the necessity of international legitimacy for long-term survival, espouse softer rhetoric, and are ready to engage in political dialogue with the West. On the other end of this spectrum are hard-line, ideological elements unwilling to accept any outcome beyond hostile military take-over of GIRoA. As the focus of the Taliban's effort gradually becomes less about expelling ISAF, and increasingly directed towards a political endgame, we judge the fault lines between pragmatist and hard-liner will intensify.

...**Taliban Senior Leaders May Resent AQ, but Clean Break Unlikely.** Open source interviews indicate some Taliban acknowledge protecting AQ cost them their regime, which has likely fostered resentment towards the terrorist organization among Taliban senior leaders. However, the Taliban still refuse to officially renounce AQ and do not appear to be taking any proactive steps to discipline its commanders who cooperate and likely harbor AQ in remote regions of northwestern Afghanistan. The Taliban refuse to remain silent when suggestions of their poor relations with AQ are published in the media, choosing instead to steadfastly deny reports. Despite tensions, we assess the Taliban and AQ are unlikely to completely sever ties in the near future.

...**Sustained Operations Degrade al Qaida.** We judge AQ, by itself, presents only a localized tactical threat and no danger to the survival of GIRoA or the success of ISAF's campaign. However, a small AQ presence will likely remain entrenched in remote areas of Nuristan and Kunar post-2014. Sustained operational pressure on AQ's limited presence, primarily in Nuristan and Kunar, have ensured the group remains focused on survival and has difficulty effectively projecting external operations from Afghanistan.

Overall Security Situation and Trends

Experts provide an equally usual perspective on the overall trends in the fighting:

...**Kabul Security Improved and Sustainable.** Retaining Kabul and securing its population are essential tasks within the ISAF campaign plan. Despite repeated attempts and strategic prioritization, enemy efforts to destabilize Kabul in 2012 were unsuccessful. Security in Kabul continues to improve, with ANSF proactively neutralizing the threat of high profile attack facilitators. However, we judge the enemy will contest security in the regions surrounding Kabul,

which could enable enemy high profile attack facilitation in Kabul. ANSF security forces, partnered and advised by ISAF, will remain capable of thwarting most high profile attack threats and will not allow a significant decline in Kabul security through 2014.

...Decline in RC East Security Could Threaten Kabul Progress. The troop strength increase in RC East was modest when compared to RCs South and Southwest. Consequently, while the ANSF was better enabled to conduct more regular patrols and offensive operations, they were unable to establish the level of presence and patrolling to be effective. Insurgent influence and freedom of movement along MSRs waned due to ISAF's enhanced presence, but the surge recovery will likely allow some insurgent resurgence in RC East.

...Logar and Wardak strategically neighbor Kabul, forming key points of access to the city from the south and west. Control and access to these routes, as well as staging areas into Kabul, make this important physical and human terrain. Wardak and Logar provinces are particularly important as the primary insurgent facilitation areas for high profile attacks against Kabul. Secondary and tertiary routes also remain open to insurgent exploitation as robust IED and suicide bomber facilitation networks still exist. While high value targeting operations remain an effective impediment in this area, the ANSF are in the process of consolidating their disposition, a move likely to be exploited by the enemy. While we judge the ANSF will be effective in Logar and Wardak at static defense, we are less confident in their ability to conduct aggressive patrolling and disruption operations.

...In Ghazni Province, the increase in violence is likely attributable to a combination of ISAF operations and subsequent enemy responses. The emergence of ALP, when coupled with anti-Taliban sentiments in Ghazni, is likely to continue posing a challenge and resource drain on Taliban attempting to assert influence into 2013. While Zabul Province has a scant population and holds limited strategic value as an insurgent transit area, the stretch of Highway 1 connecting RC South to RC East is important. We assess insurgents will remain focused on contesting freedom of movement along Highway 1, realizing its strategic importance as the primary ground line of communication linking Kandahar to Kabul.

...Kandahar City Security Improved, Strong ANSF Presence Remains. The surge effectively degraded enemy influence in the population center of Kandahar City, enabling highly effective ANSF growth and development to protect surge gains. However, the extent of enemy degradation is not yet on par with Central Helmand River Valley. High profile attack capabilities in Kandahar City were degraded, albeit insurgents retain influence in parts of the neighboring and rural districts of Zharay and Panjwa'i, as well as parts of northern Kandahar Province, where there is little Combined Team presence. We judge the ANSF's growth, improvements, and inter-service coordination among NOS and ANA will be able to manage future security challenges and maintain Combined Team gains in Kandahar City, its surrounding environs, and Spin Boldak. However, the enemy retains sufficient influence in western Panjwa'i to continue posing a moderate threat to Kandahar City. Additionally, insurgents will likely exploit reductions in ISAF presence and gradual ANSF consolidation in some rural areas. We judge ANSF presence and static defense will protect security gains in population centers and along key lines of communication. We expect some consolidation of ANA checkpoints along MSRs, with a likely ANP backfill, could result in decreased security in some rural areas.

...Central Helmand River Valley Largely Secured. The surge effectively ended insurgent control of, and degraded insurgent influence in, the Central Helmand River Valley region of Helmand Province, which includes the city of Lashkar Gah and the surrounding population. Failure to disrupt and degrade enemy influence in Helmand would have likely been detrimental to ISAF's campaign plan and ensured little to no sustainable progress was made elsewhere. The enemy's loss of influence was most demonstrated in Lashkar Gah, Marjeh, Nawa-e Barakzai, Nad-e Ali and Garm Ser districts. Progress in Helmand since the surge has been among the most demonstrable in Afghanistan, with reduced violence, raising of an entire ANA corps, a police force numbering several thousand where it once numbered several hundred, and marked improvements in Afghan population sentiments of their local security and confidence the Taliban will not return to power. The enemy understands the value of Helmand and will attempt to exploit

any seams or vulnerabilities they can find. It is crucial that security forces are sufficiently developed and enabled to protect these hard-earned counterinsurgency gains.

...**RC West:** RC West remained an economy of force effort throughout the surge and has remained relatively stable in the population center of Herat City. While RC West is experiencing limited security deterioration in Pashtun pockets, we judge these areas will not strategically aid the insurgency or increase the Taliban threat to GIRoA.

...**RC North:** RC North experienced a pre-surge troop increase in 2009 that effectively halted the expansion of the insurgency and bolstered security. The insurgency's influence and capability to destabilize RC North is low.

...the surge was largely effective in reducing enemy control and enemy influence in every major population center where additional resources were applied. The surge was less successful in sustaining effects of clearing operations along Highway 1 and in Logar and Wardak provinces. Strategically, the enemy is weaker in 2012 than it was pre-surge, though insurgents are confident the impending drawdown of ISAF and perceived weakness of ANSF will translate into a restoration of its pre-surge military capability and level of influence. We assess the Taliban will not pose an existential threat to the ANSF or GIRoA through 2014.

This assessment is scarcely a guarantee of either Afghan government or ANSF success, but it is a critical counterbalance to the kind of “spin” used in the previous metrics and it does offer real hope for a Transition if: one, the ANSF has the funding and continuing US and allied support it will need after 2014; two, the 2014 election produces an effective leader and better governance; and three, the Afghan economy is not crippled by cuts in aid and military spending.

Blending Metrics and Narrative

There are no clear rules or precedents for doing the job right. More than a decade of effort in Iraq and Afghanistan has left the US without any clear model of how to assess the political-civil-economic-military progress of the war in Afghanistan and with a history of failed metrics and metrics that were suppressed the moment they became negative or did not reflect police. As Volume II of this study shows, the official metrics and narrative for economic aid are far worse than those for the course of the fighting and substantially less honest and objective.

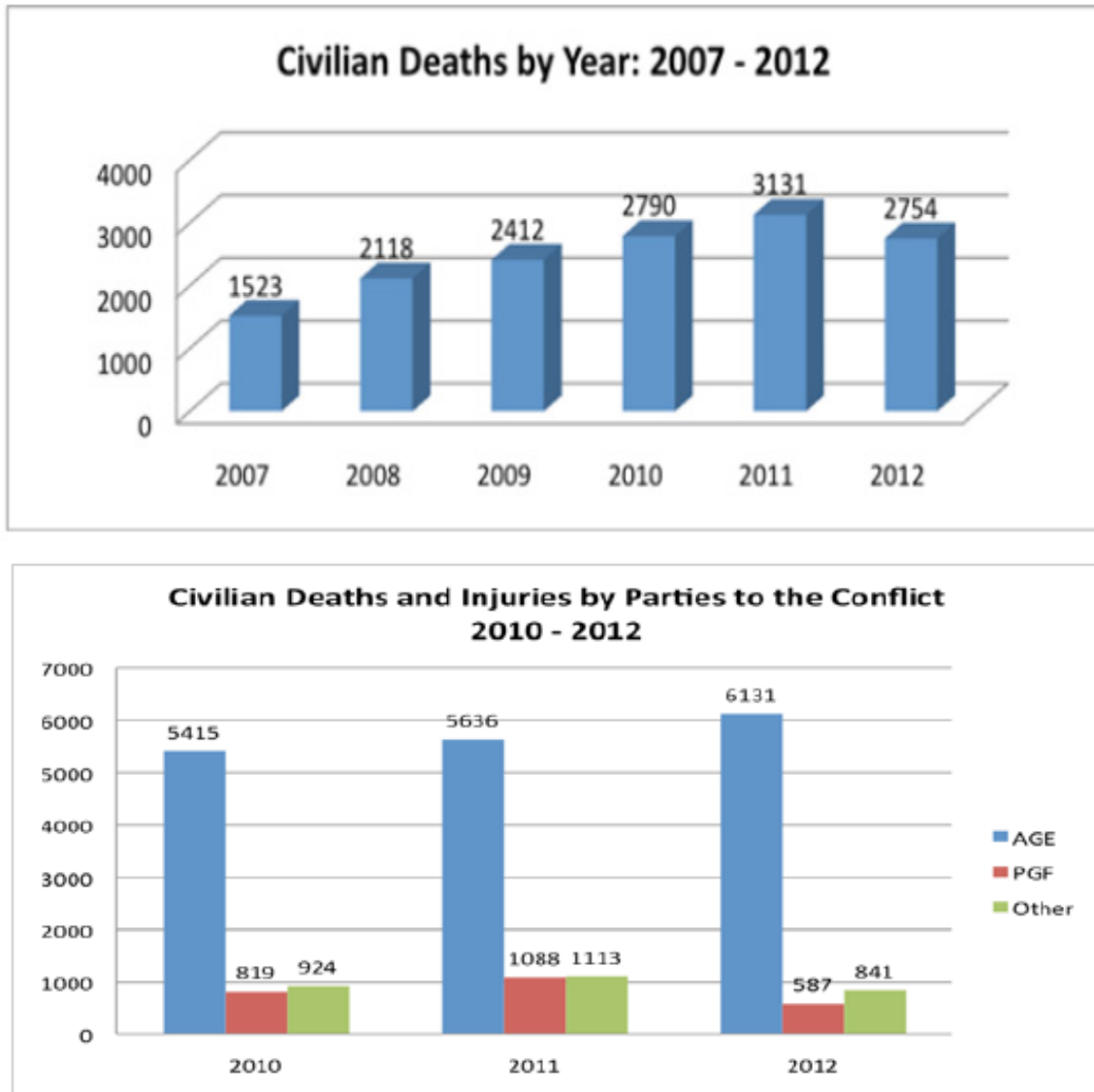
There are, however, some lessons that at least could provide adequate assessments for the future:

- Assess Afghan government and ANSF strategic, actions, and effectiveness at the same time as the insurgents. Make net assessment and not threat assessments.
- Combine narratives and metrics. Never separate them.
- Focus on key areas of combat and key problems; do not attempt nation-wide generalizations and metrics.
- Recognize that there is no such thing as an objective or judgment-free metric. No mix of input data, mathematical modeling, and presentation can avoid such judgments, and attempt to omit value judgments tend to make things worse rather than better.
- Accept the complexity of given problems and issues. Denying complexity and uncertainty makes things worse, not better.
- Tie leadership, governance, economics, security, and popular perceptions together. Insurgencies will always be political, economic, and military struggles and focusing on part of the problem does not help.

- Show multiple trends and measures of effectiveness. Provide transparency on the full range of key variables.
- Explicitly state the range of opinion and key uncertainties. Use parametric analysis where the level of uncertainty justifies the effort.
- Clearly identify the range of key variables in beginning the analysis and let them shape the narratives and metrics that follow. For example, one approach used for District-by-District analysis in part of ISAF focused on:
 - Perceptions of security.
 - Perceptions of governance.
 - Freedom of movement locally and regionally.
 - Civilian security measures like significant acts or SIGACTS, criminal activity, and civilian casualties.
 - District governance and corruption.
 - ANSF presence by force element.
 - Market activity.
- Understand that analysis is built up over time and should steadily improve in scope and accuracy, but it is far more important to stay relevant and focuses on the future than maintain consistency in the model and trend analyses.
- The purpose of analysis is to win, not to show the progress made by the current commander or highest-ranking civilian.
- No military force or counterinsurgency effort will ever need real outside enemies if it lets public affairs officers and spin dominate the analysis and the message.
- A lack of credible honesty and Transparency breeds media hostility, legislative doubt, and public indifference and rejection.

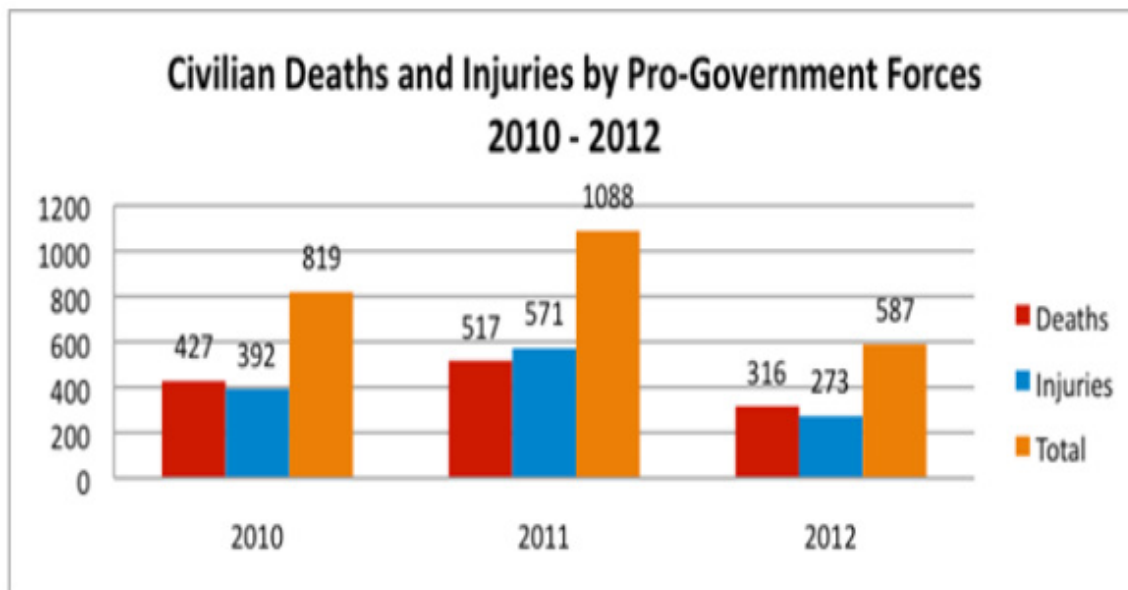
These are not complex or subtle lessons. Neither is the cost of failing to learn them.

Figure 14: Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan



Source: *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, p. 2-3 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

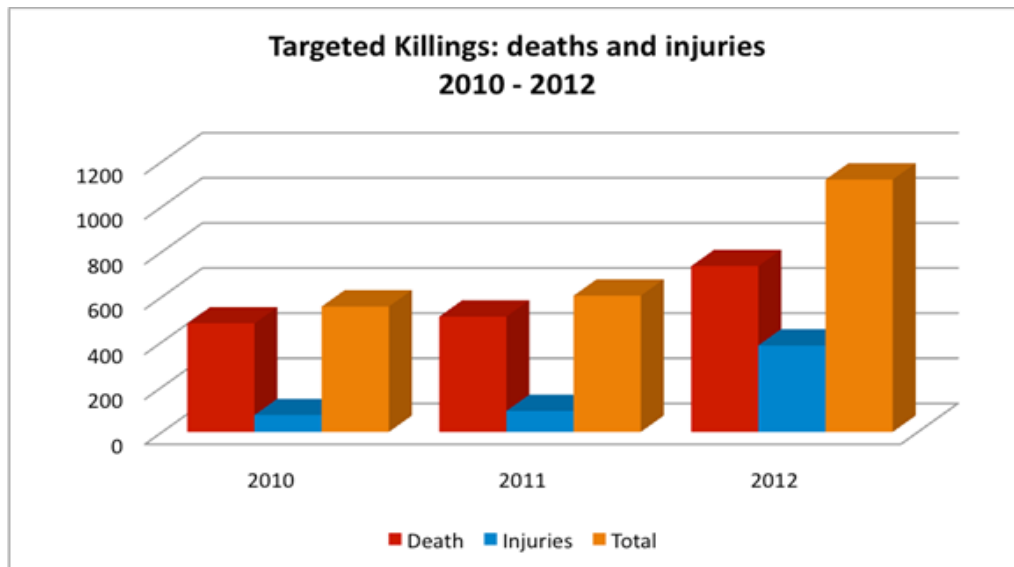
Figure 15: Civilian Deaths and Injuries by ANSF Forces



Source: *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, p. 30 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

Figure 16: Trends in Casualties and Targeted Killings: 2010-2014

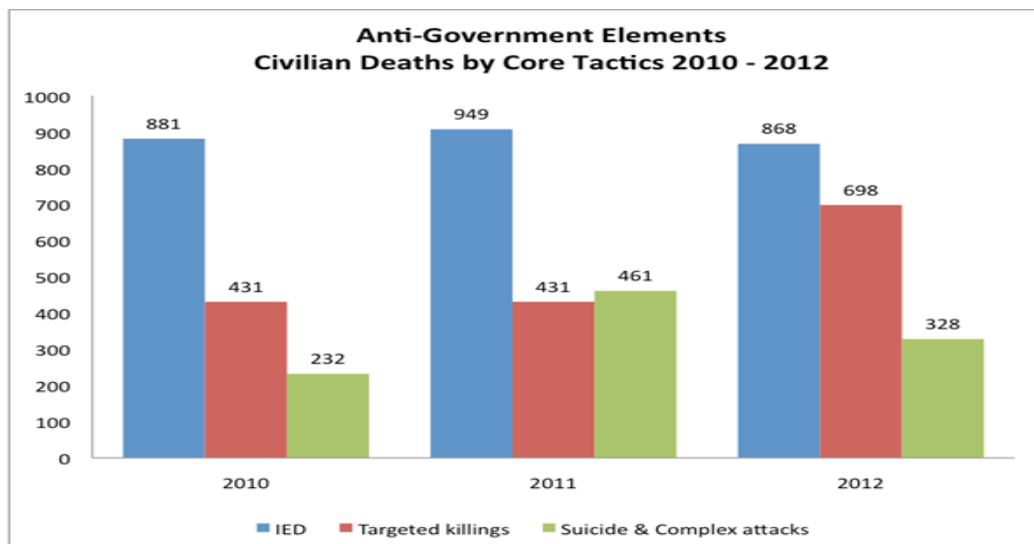
Targeted Killings – A Key Measure of Insurgent Activity – Are Way Up



“UNAMA documented 1,077 civilian casualties (698 civilian deaths and 379 civilian injuries) in 565 incidents of targeted killings by Anti-Government Elements in 2012. This represents a 108 percent increase in civilian casualties from this tactic compared with 2011. The number of attack on Afghan government official rose by 700% during 2011-2012.”

Source: *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, p. 22-23 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

No Meaningful Improvement in IEDs, Targeted Killings, or Complex Attacks



Source: *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, p. 22-23 (© 2013 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

(Politically Driven?) Plans for Transitioning Provinces and Districts

There is no way to know how many of the problems in US and ISAF reporting on the security situation will be corrected in the months to come, and whether ISAF will correct a fundamental lack of transparency and command integrity in such reporting. At the same time, there are some indicators that ISAF and the ANSF have secured much of the country, although they do highlight the scale of the security problems the ANSF faces as a result of Transition.

While some of the current claims of success in transferring responsibility for security to the ANSF are cosmetic – and driven as much by the 2014 deadline as by real-world ANSF capability – many are real. Moreover, some provide a good enough unclassified picture of the relative insurgent threat by area to illustrate why a strategy based on securing key population centers and lines of communication, and containing the insurgents to limited areas of limited strategic importance, may work.

The broad transition plan for giving ANSF forces responsibility for given provinces and districts is shown in **Figure 17**. This figure is based on DoD data, and the areas in Tranches 1-3 are generally supposed to be the most secure areas in the country and most of the areas in Tranche 4 are now supposed to be relatively secure.

Plan and Conditions for Transfer

Different sources report the transition plan and conditions for transfer in somewhat different ways – although all stress that the transfer process has been tied to the level of security in the areas being transferred. The DoD described the transfer plan as follows in December 2012:¹⁵

The Transition process was jointly conceived of and developed by the Afghan government, the United States, NATO, and ISAF Coalition partners in a series of international conferences during 2010, beginning with the London Conference in January and culminating in the NATO Summit in Lisbon in November 2012.

Transition is being implemented in accordance with the *Integral* Framework across all 261 districts from Tranches 1, 2 and 3. As the ANSF demonstrates its capability, the level of ISAF support is adjusted allowing the ANSF to take more responsibility. At the end of September 2012, the ANSF had begun to assume the lead for security in 261 of the country's 405 districts. The increasing capability of the ANSF has expanded security gains in many Transitioning areas.

Tranche 1 and 2 areas (138 districts in 20 provinces) continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan, both in terms of objective measures and Afghan population perceptions.

The Transition process met another major milestone this reporting period with President Karzai's May 13 announcement of Tranche 3. With the implementation of Tranche 3, approximately 76 percent of the Afghan population lives in areas where the ANSF are in the lead for security. Tranche 3 is more expansive than the first two tranches with 122 new districts entering the Transition process. It includes all remaining provincial capitals and major transportation corridors. To better manage risk in subsequent tranches, some of Afghanistan's more challenging districts

¹⁵ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 28-29.

were included in Tranche 3 while ISAF has sufficient combat power to address significant security challenges in support of ANSF.

Implementation of Transition in Tranche 3 areas has already begun. For Tranche 3, the Afghan government assumed responsibility for organizing Transition ceremonies, marking the start of Transition. Between July and September, Transition ceremonies were held in provinces entering Transition for the first time. With the start of Tranche 3, 11 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces are wholly in Transition, including Kabul, Balkh, Samangan, Takhar, Bamyan, Panjshayr, Daykundi and Nimroz.

Planning for Tranche 4 began during the reporting period. Transition readiness improved in 36 of the remaining 143 districts waiting to enter Transition, and no districts declined in their readiness ratings. As with Tranche 3, Tranche 4 will likely include areas with significant security challenges; however, managing the associated risk with the forces available is an important planning factor.

ISAF put it in the transfer plan in more formal terms:¹⁶

Transition Process Explained

Transition draws on the JANIB's recommendations, which are based on a thorough assessment of the security, governance and development situation on the ground.

The following elements are taken into consideration as part of the decision-making process:

- the capability of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to shoulder additional security tasks with less assistance from ISAF;
- the level of security allowing the population to pursue routine daily activities;
- the degree of development of local governance, so that security will not be undermined as ISAF assistance is reduced; and
- whether ISAF is postured properly to thin out as ANSF capabilities increase and threat levels diminish.

For Transition to be successful, the Afghan National Security Forces, under effective Afghan civilian control, need to assume their security responsibility on a sustainable and irreversible basis – albeit with some level of continued support from ISAF.

The Transition implementation can take up to 18 months for each area, depending on conditions on the ground.

ISAF Principles for Transition

At the NATO Lisbon Summit in November 2010, ISAF Heads of State and Government agreed to a list of principles which guide ISAF's gradual shift from a combat to an increasingly supporting role. These principles, which have since been fully incorporated in the Transition implementation process, include:

- ensuring a better alignment of NATO/ISAF assistance with Afghan national priority programs;
- working through increasingly capable Afghan institutions;
- adjusting ISAF's troop profile and configuration by reinvesting some of the Transition dividend, where appropriate, to meet critical security, training and mentoring needs;
- further strengthening Afghan National Security Forces capacity; and
- supporting the evolution of the international civilian effort, including that of the ISAF

¹⁶ *Integral: Transition to Afghan Lead*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed March 22, 2013. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_87183.htm.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), to enable greater Afghan capacity and leadership.

Evolution of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

In June 2011, Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) nations agreed a set of principles for the evolution and ultimate dissolution of their PRTs. Many PRTs are already evolving, shifting their efforts from direct delivery to providing technical assistance and building the capacity of provincial and district governments to provide essential services to the Afghan people. By the time transition is completed, all PRTs will have handed over their functions to the Afghan government, traditional development actors, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and will have phased out.

The GAO reports that transfers are supposed to be based on four factors, and that they do represent wider ANSF coverage of a relatively secure part of the population:¹⁷

- “1. the capability of ANSF to take on additional security tasks with less assistance from ISAF;
- “2. the level of security needed to allow the population to pursue routine daily activities;
- “3. the degree of development of local governance; and
- “4. whether ISAF is properly positioned to withdraw as ANSF capabilities increase and threat levels diminish.

“The transition for each geographic area is a multiphased process, with ISAF tracking progress through metrics, such as security and governance. The areas (provinces, districts, and/or cities) are grouped into one of five tranches for transition. As of December 2012, the transition of four of the five tranches had been announced, and over 87 percent of the Afghan population was living in areas under Afghan lead security with the military support of U.S. and coalition partners. By mid-2013, it is expected that all areas will have entered the transition process and that by December 2014 the transition will be complete.

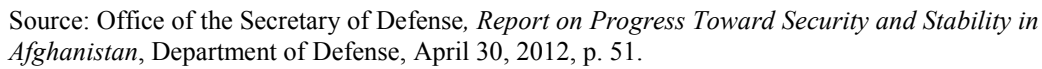
“According to ISAF, ANSF would need to be under effective Afghan civilian control and fully capable of addressing security challenges on a sustainable and irreversible basis for the transition to be successful. However, the readiness of the Afghan government to sustain ANSF has been questioned.”

What all sources make clear is that **Figure 17** is *supposed* to reflect transfers that are based on the relative security of given districts. As was the case in Iraq, however, some parts of the areas shown as transferred in Tranches 1-3 do still have the presence of hostile elements or insurgent influence and control, and some areas have been transferred for political reasons – regardless of the real-world level of security that exists on the ground.

There are serious questions as to whether the current reports and plans understate the risks in such transfers and exaggerate the current and near-term capability of the Afghan government and ANSF to accept such transfers as the areas in given tranches become less stable and secure. Experts in the areas make it clear that the transfer of responsibility is sometimes being shaped to meet an end-2014 schedule, not a transfer according to ANSF capability. It is being driven by US and allied troop withdrawals, from a total of 91,000 US and 40,313 allied troops in early 2012 to some 68,000 US and 36,905 allied troops in October 2012.

¹⁷ *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 19.

Transitioning Provinces as of March 31, 2011



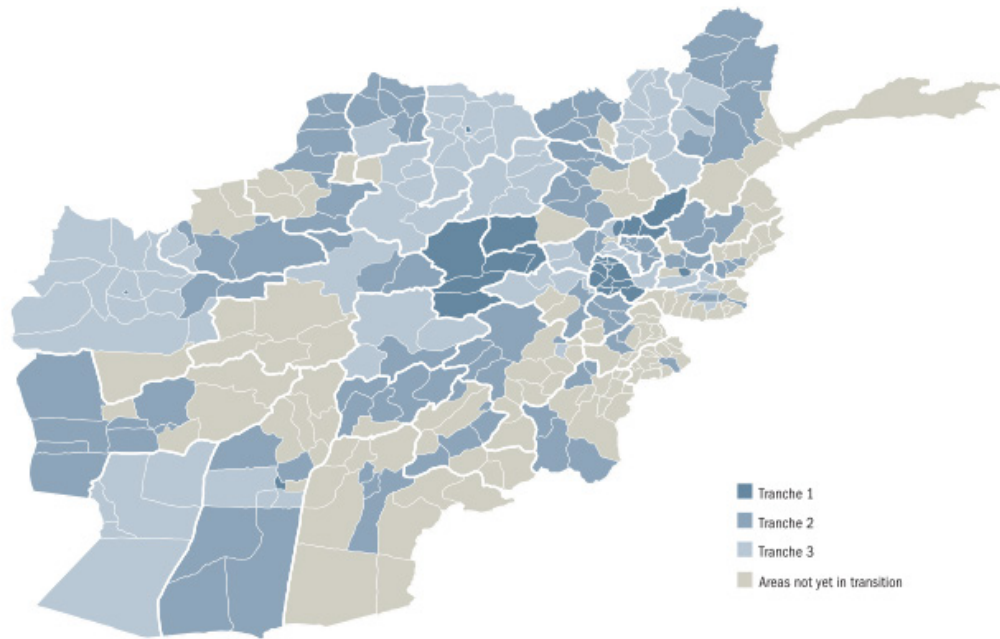
The map displays the following provinces and their assigned tranches:

- Tranche 1 (Green):** Kabul, Herat, and parts of Kandahar and Badghis.
- Tranche 2 (Yellow):** Herat, Badghis, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Samangan, Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan, Parwan, Laghman, Kunar, Wardak, Daykundi, Ghazni, Uruzgan, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, and Kandahar.
- Tranche 3 (Blue):** Jowzjan, Kunduz, Kunduz, Badakhshan, Nuristan, Paktika, Zabul, and parts of Kandahar and Badghis.

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p 28.

Figure 17: Plan for Transferring Security Responsibility – Part Two

As of January 2013



Source: *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, January 30, 2013, p. 72.

Progress to Date

Transition of the first of five ‘tranches’ was announced by President Karzai in March 2011, followed by the second in November 2011, the third in May 2012, and the fourth in December 2012. The full transfer in each tranche other than the fifth is supposed to last some 12-18 months.¹⁸

ISAF summarizes the progress to date in **Figure 18**. By the end of the fourth tranche, the ANSF will take the security lead in areas where 87% of the Afghan population lives, and 23 of the 34 Afghan provinces will be transferred or in the transition process.¹⁹ So far, some 261 of some 405 districts have already been formally transferred to the ANSF, along with some 76% of the population and all provincial capitals and major transportation corridors.

In practice, there is no clear way to know the degree to which Afghan forces have actually assumed responsibility in the field or their effectiveness. There is also no way to know what areas are under real central government control, dominated by local power brokers, or have serious insurgent or criminal influence.

In broad terms, the transfers to date have been in areas assessed as having a low to relatively low threat – at least in terms of EIAs. DoD does, however, report that the actual level of ANSF control is mixed:²⁰

ISAF’s mission focus remains to protect the people of Afghanistan by supporting the sovereign government in the development of a national security force capable of assuming the lead responsibility for security operations. Upon entry into Transition, the ANSF assume lead security responsibility for that area and become the supported command, with ISAF becoming the supporting command. During the Transition process, staff functions are steadily transferred to the ANSF as their capability increases. ISAF often retains military assets in that area, and when required, engages in combat operations alongside the ANSF. As the ANSF take on more responsibility and become capable of more independent operations, ISAF support is reduced, and authority to provide additional support migrates upwards to the Commander IJC (COMIJC) and then to the Commander ISAF (COMISAF). Areas proceed through Transition on different timelines based upon demonstrated improvement in security, governance, and rule of law, and to the increased proficiency of the ANSF. At completion, the ANSF assume full security responsibility.

The DoD assessment of actual progress in security and ANSF performance in this mission is the closest thing to an unclassified assessment of ANSF capability in the field that exists, but it is important to note that it seems to be largely based on EIAs, rather than meaningful counterinsurgency criteria, and still raises important questions about ANSF performance:²¹

¹⁸ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service, 7-5700, January 4, 2013, p. 23.

¹⁹ “Afghanistan enters fourth stage in transition of power from US forces,” *The Express Tribune*, December 31, 2012. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/487026/afghanistan-enters-fourth-stage-in-transition-of-power-from-us-forces/>.

²⁰ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 28.

²¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 29-30.

The increasing capability of the ANSF has expanded security gains in many Transitioning areas. Tranche 1 and 2 areas (138 districts in 20 provinces) continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan, both in terms of objective measures and Afghan population perceptions. As U.S. and Coalition Forces draw down and re-posture, the ANSF are progressively taking the lead in transition areas and helping to expand Afghan government influence, most notably in RC-N, where the Coalition will withdraw all of its forces from the eastern- and western-most districts toward the end of 2012. Additionally, there has been evidence of the ANSF independently expanding security in areas where ISAF does not have an established presence, showing the initiative and capability to establish security in areas before they have formally entered the Transition process, including Nuristan and other districts in the north. Improving and maintaining security in Tranche 3 will be more challenging than in the first two tranches because several areas entered Transition at lower readiness levels. Additionally, later tranches may also be challenged by successful operations in Tranches 1, 2, and 3 that have caused some insurgent forces to migrate into less secure areas, largely outside of the population centers.

The DoD report does, however, repeat ISAF's largely irrelevant past focus on EIAs in discussing this progress:²²

Notably, during the reporting period, EIAs declined in two of the three Transition Tranches, although this reduction was variable by geographic area with some transition areas still facing challenges. EIAs declined in transitioning areas overall by four percent, with Tranches 1 and 3 experiencing nine and seven percent decreases, respectively, compared to the same period last year. EIAs in Tranche 2 went up four percent. In districts that have not yet entered Transition, there was a six percent increase in the number of EIAs over 2011. Tranches 1 and 2 continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan by objective measures and Afghan perceptions, although the most drastic reductions in EIA-related violence in transitioning areas occurred in RC-SW and RC-S.

The practical problem is that such data on EIAs say nothing about the level of insurgent influence, the level of support for the government in "Kabulstan," the overall level of security in the field, or the effectiveness of ANSF forces in maintaining and expanding security coverage in their area of operation. It borders on being a nonsensical metric. The DoD report does, however, go on to say that,²³

Although these security gains were significant, progress was uneven across the country and within regions, with some Transition areas still facing challenges and occasionally regressing insecurity. Transitioning areas with the greatest reduction in attacks were Helmand, around the southern Helmand River Valley, and Kandahar, particularly Kandahar City and Uruzgan, where combined operations were focused over the summer. Additionally, in Kabul, where the ANSF have full security lead, security incidents have stayed at minimal levels, with HPAs declining significantly since last year.

EIA trends in Transition areas in the east were mixed. Many districts in Wardak and Kapisa saw considerable reductions in EIAs, while much of Logar and Ghazni experienced sizable increases, likely due to the preponderance of ANSF/ISAF operations those areas and the introduction of an additional Coalition brigade in Ghazni. The ANSF conducted unilateral operations in southern Paktika, establishing security and accepting responsibility for security lead.

Although attacks rose slightly in Transition areas in the west, it was not statistically significant, and much of the increase occurred in the southern-most and least-populated provinces of Farah and Ghor – likely a result of spillover from operations in northern Helmand. Similarly, in the north,

²² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 30.

²³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Department of Defense, December 2012, p. 30-31.

there was a slight increase in insurgent-related violence but the overwhelming majority was concentrated in the in ethnic Pashtun pockets of the Kunduz-Baghlan corridor.

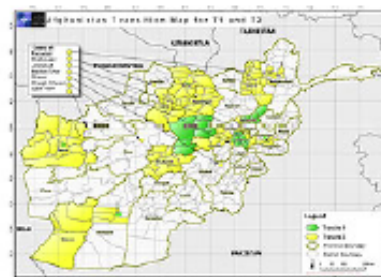
In general, the ANSF are displaying increased capability and sophistication in transitioning areas, particularly in RC-E and RC-S, where they are planning and conducting large-scale, multiday operations and showing increased coordination and integration across military and police pillars. Kabul remains the safest area in the country under ANSF-led security. However, lack of coordination between ANA and AUP in general continues to be one of the major challenges in transitioning areas, along with attacks along access routes to major population centers and government ineffectiveness. Governance and development tend to lag behind security and will require continued assistance through the Decade of Transformation

*Figure 18: Progress in Transition Tranches as of March 2013***Transition Tranche 1**

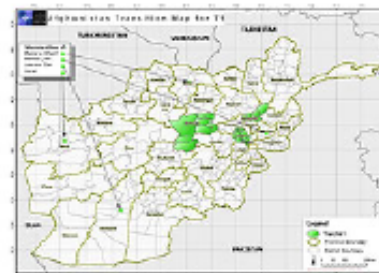
On 22 March 2011, President Karzai announced the first set of Afghan provinces and districts to start transition. This decision was based upon operational, political and economic considerations, drawing on the assessment and recommendations of the Afghan government and NATO/ISAF through the Joint Afghan-NATO Integral Board (JANIB).

Transition Tranche 2

On 27 November 2011, following the decision-making process above, President Karzai announced the second set of Afghan provinces, districts and cities for transition implementation.



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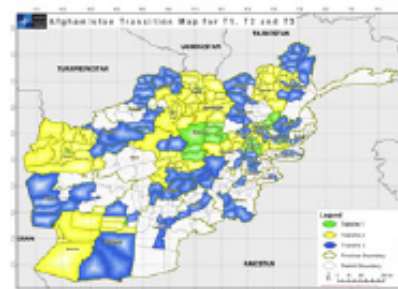
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Transition Tranche 3

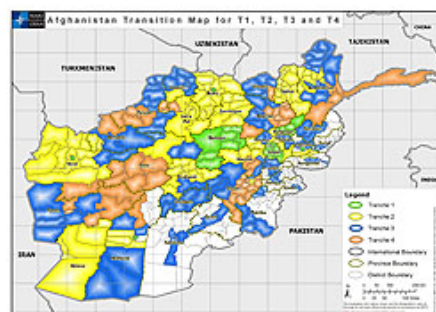
On 13 May 2012, President Karzai announced the third set of areas to enter the transition process, covering over 75% of the Afghan population. Once this decision is implemented, transition will have begun in every one of the 34 provinces of Afghanistan, including every provincial capital, and will cover almost two-thirds of the country's districts.

Transition Tranche 4

On 31 December 2012, President Karzai announced the fourth group of Afghan provinces, cities and districts to enter the transition process. Once this decision is implemented, 87 per cent of the population will live in areas where ANSF is responsible for its security. With this announcement, 23 provinces out of 34 are now fully in transition: Badkhash (fully entered transition in T4); Baghlan (T4); Balkh (T2); Faryab (T4); Jowzjan (T4); Kunduz (T4); Samangan (T2); Sar-e Pul (T4); Takhar (T2); Bamyan (T1); Ghazni (T4); Kapisa (T3); Panjshayr (T1); Parwan (T3); Wardak (T4); Kabul (T2); Daykundi (T2); Uruzgan (T3); Nimruz (T2); Badghis (T4); Farah (T4); Ghor (T4); Herat (T4).



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Source: International Security Assistance Force, March 21, 2013.

ANSO's Indirect Report on "Progress"

As has been touched upon earlier, other groups like ANSO have drawn different conclusions about levels of risk in the transfer of responsibility, even in the relatively secure areas involved in Tranches 1-3. It is interesting to contrast the ANSO estimate of risk by area with the risk assessments in the ISAF map showing the limited risks in Tranche 4 and the higher risk areas in Tranche 5. This comparison is shown in **Figure 19**.

ANSO found that six of the 11 provinces transferred to date in Tranches 1-3 recorded an increase in insurgent activity during 2010-2011, while three of the six provinces where insurgent activity increased also saw a decrease in ANSF activity. It found that Uruzgan was the only province that experienced an increase in ANSF activity.²⁴

ANSO found that overall insurgent activity declined by 7% in the transitioned provinces in 2010-2011, but it declined by 25% in the non-transitioned provinces. In short, ANSO found that the provinces that have not transitioned to ANSF control did better in terms of violence than those that did transition – evidently because of the superior military and security capabilities of ISAF. ANSO concluded that, "This leaves us with the conclusion that there is no clear correlation between Transition, reduced AOG (insurgent) activity, and increased ANSF activity."²⁵

ANSO may or may not be correct, but it should be clear that simply stating responsibility has been transferred is in no way a measure of merit. Failing to show that transfer is effective and lasting – rather than driven by cost, time, and withdrawal deadlines – may pave the way to the exit but it is in no way an honest assessment of the ANSF's performance.

In his 2013 State of the Union address, President Obama said that 34,000 US troops will be withdrawn from Afghanistan by February 2014, leaving roughly 32,000 remaining in Afghanistan. The number of troops will be reduced to approximately 60,500 by the end of May 2013, with a further reduction to 52,000 by the end of November. This allows the military to maintain significant force strength through the 2013 fighting season, with the more significant troop withdrawals taking place in the winter.²⁶

While these reductions are in line with former US and NATO Commander General John Allen's recommendations, his replacement, General Joseph Dunford Jr., had been seeking a 2013 reduction of no more than 25,000, with 43,000 troops remaining in Afghanistan in 2013.²⁷ After the speech, Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman General Mohammad Zahir Azimi commented, "We welcome this... We will take all security responsibilities by the end of 2013."²⁸

²⁴ *Quarterly Data Report: Q4*, Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 2012, p. 17.
<http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>.

²⁵ *Quarterly Data Report: Q4*, Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 2012 p. 17.
<http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>.

²⁶ Michael R. Gordon and Mark Landler, "Decision on Afghan Troop Levels Calculates Political and Military Interests," *New York Times*, February 12, 2013.

²⁷ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Obama wants to cut troop level in Afghanistan in half over next year," *Washington Post*, February 12, 2013.

²⁸ *Obama announces 34,000 troops to leave Afghanistan*, BBC, February 13, 2013.

These withdrawals have already made it impossible to sustain the US troop presence in the south and to implement the US/ISAF campaign plans in the east and for all critical districts, issued in 2010 and 2011.²⁹ Although President Obama has not yet made a decision on how many troops will remain in Afghanistan post-2014, the US force may not exceed 10,000, plus some Special Operations Forces (SOFs) and other elements.

Unconfirmed press reports present widely different figures. In some, DoD is said to be recommending a 2015 US troop strength of 8,000 that would shrink significantly by 2017 to perhaps no fewer than 1,000.³⁰ NATO is currently considering an overall mission size of 8,000-12,000 troops after 2014, though some reports indicated that this referred to the potential number of remaining US troops.³¹ The plans to cut the number of US positions in Afghanistan from roughly 90 to four or five during 2013-2014 will not only steadily reduce US capabilities but also are almost certain to be matched or exceeded by other ISAF forces.

Moreover, the analysis which follows shows there are equally critical questions as to when the ANSF can really become ready to be truly independent, and as to the levels of future outside aid and advisory personnel needed to sustain ANSF forces. There are severe weaknesses in the Afghan military forces which are being compounded by the steadily increasing efforts to simultaneously expand the ANA and rush it into the field while simultaneously reducing the levels of funding, trainers, and partners deployed.

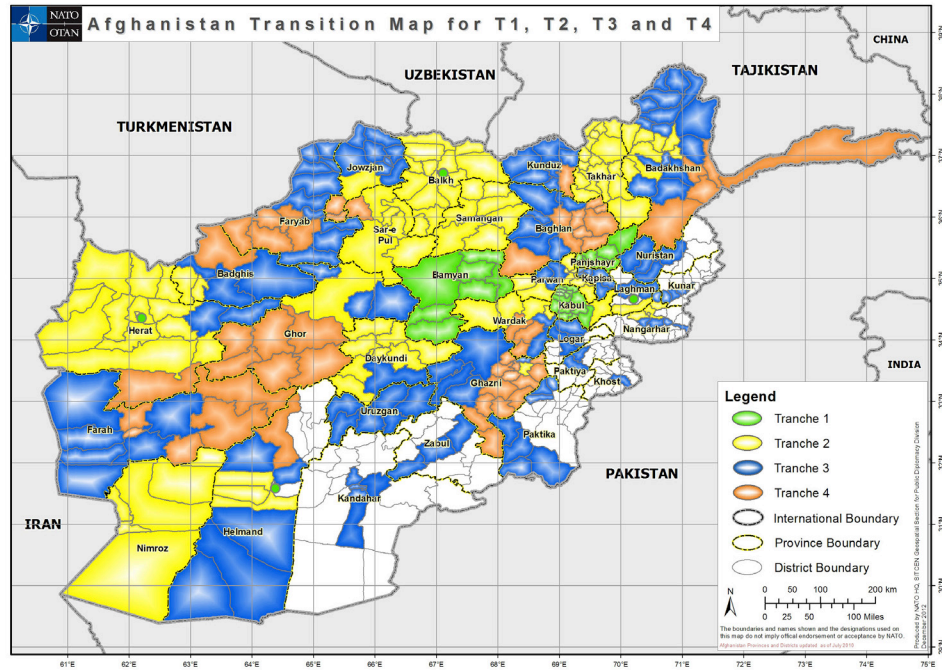
²⁹ These numbers are drawn from OSD and ISAF reporting, The October 2012 SIGAR Quarterly report provides different numbers for the US: "According to U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), 76,000 U.S. forces were serving in the country as of September 30, 2012. Of those, approximately 54,000 were assigned to ISAF, 2,000 to NTM-A/CSTC-A (the joint NATO/U.S. mission responsible for training, equipping, and sustaining the ANSF), and 7,800 to USFOR-A, while 12,200 were categorized as 'other U.S. military personnel.' On September 21, 2012, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced that the drawdown of the 30,000 surge force was complete." *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, October 30, 2012, p. 95.

³⁰ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Obama wants to cut troop level in Afghanistan in half over next year," *Washington Post*, February 12, 2013.

³¹ Gordon Lubold, "Situation Report," *Foreign Policy*, February 22, 2013.

Figure 19: ISAF Map of Tranches Four and Five vs. ANSO Risk Assessment Based on Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012

ISAF



ANSO



Adapted from: *Quarterly Data Report: Q4*, Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, 2012, p. 17.
<http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>.

Drawing the Right Conclusions About Reporting on Security and Progress in the War

There is no way to assess unclassified reporting that does not exist, no matter how much it should exist. ISAF and the ANSF urgently need to correct their past mistakes, and create a mix of reports that fully reflect the complexity and all the key aspects of the war, build credibility and trust in their reporting, and provide transparency in terms of the uncertainties and issues involved. These are basic criteria for honest government, and ones the US and ISAF have previously failed to meet.

There are many ways this can be done, and ISAF almost certainly has a range of metrics and narratives that are now classified, but could easily be declassified to provide the kind of reporting needed to judge and assist Transition. There also are many ways that such reporting can be accomplished. The key tests are:

- Net assessment of insurgent and Afghan government progress at the political, tactical, and economic levels.
- Clear mapping and assessment of the relative level and trends in security, governance, rule of law, and popular support by area.
- Metrics and narratives that focus on combat and trends in key regions and areas of conflict, and not on national averages, trends, polls, and other statistics.
- Assessments of each major insurgent group that go beyond its goals and tactics in 2013 to examine its full range of plans and options in a war of political attrition that is almost certain to extend beyond 2016.
- A willingness to honestly address the scale of problems as well as report real progress and real successes.
- A focus on both the problems and tensions within each insurgent movement and the matching problems in political alignment, corruption, political power brokering, and ties to narcotics and criminal networks in each element of the ANSF.
- An honest assessment of the trends in US, allied, and donor spending; troop withdrawals; and commitments to providing a military and aid presence after 2014 that clearly reveals the level of future support the ANSF can count on.
- An equal assessment of the impact of strategic framework and bilateral agreements, their strengths and weaknesses that impact on security, and Afghan and ISAF country “caveats” and rules of engagement.
- Accepting the need to deal with the complexity of the war rather than try to find some convenient way to simplify it into a meaningless abstraction.

It does not take much vision to realize that ISAF and member countries cannot meet all of these tests, for various political reasons. It takes even less vision to realize that each failure will have a military and political cost that will threaten both the ability to conduct the war and the ability to win legislative and popular support for continuing outside aid.

Money Fights as Well as Talks: ANSF Funding During and After 2014

It may seem strange to focus on money as the most important single criterion in determining the future success of the ANSF – other than the problems in future political

leadership, national unity, and government. No one can ignore the other problems in creating Afghan forces large or effective enough to do the job and prevent a worst-case scenario during Transition.

The following analysis shows, however, that the ANSF is making real progress and can probably hold after 2014 if it is given the right outside support. History also provides clear warnings that the continued availability of enough money to fund the ANSF – and the Afghan government's degree of honesty and effectiveness in distributing that money – will be a key criterion shaping the ANSF's real-world effectiveness. At present, there are no credible unclassified data on either the future costs involved or the level of funds that will really be made available.

There have been vague statements about future funding of the ANSF at \$4.1 billion a year, but with no definition of why the figure is \$4.1 billion, where the money will really go, or the cost of combat. Discussions with ISAF experts create serious questions about such numbers.

First, it makes no sense whatsoever to assume that funding should be at a constant level, should not be tailored to needs, and that requirements can be predicted with any confidence for the period beyond 2015. The fact that anyone can create some kind of cost model for any possible future in no way means that model has more than the most marginal chance of being correct or meeting actual future needs.

Moreover, ISAF experts made it clear in March 2013 that the \$4.1 billion annual figure depended on a mix of Afghan and donor funding that may or may not come. They also state that the \$4.1 billion is the nominal annual cost of a 228,000 man force at a period when the need for major ANSF combat capability is over – a date where plans must be based on guesstimates and where the date seems to have shifted from 2016 to one beyond 2018.

In practice, the real-world cost will need to include the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan Air Force (AAF), and Afghan National Police (ANP) forces that have a nominal strength of 352,000, plus 35,000-45,000 Afghan Local Police (ALP), and some 20,000 Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) light security forces. The cost “guesstimate” for such forces is at least \$4.8 billion a year through 2018. This cost would rise to a cost of \$5.1 to \$5.7 billion a year for a force with a more robust performance – including all major procurements, and investment in human capital – although the cost could drop in proportion to the equipment and supplies the US and its allies leave behind.

There is a clear need for far more transparency as to the annual military costs of Transition; more explicit planning and trade-offs; and creating a common Afghan and outside understanding of what levels of outside funding, trainers and advisors, and combat enablers and reinforcements will be available after 2014. At present, neither ISAF nor DoD has presented meaningful public details on the projected cost and detailed plan for the future development of the ANSF.

This lack of meaningful plans and cost data partly reflects a critical lack of leadership at the White House level at what resources will actually be available both in monetary terms and in terms of US forces and military commitments for the period after 2014. It also,

however, reflects the surrealistic reliance on concepts as a substitute for plans that affects the civil and economic side of outside aid efforts.

A History of Erratic Resourcing

The need for concrete plans and estimates – ones that will have to be constantly revised and updated with time – is illustrated by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) and GAO cost profiles shown in **Figure 20**. The SIGAR data for FY2005-FY2012 at the top of **Figure 20** includes spending that accounts for roughly 90% of the total US *and* other outside funding of the ANSF. The data also shows something that is all too easy to forget in evaluating both ANSF progress and the quality of the training and force building efforts. Serious funding did not begin until FY2007, and quickly saturated a training and force development base that lacked the personnel to do the job. This led to a pause in FY2008 and consistent funding did not begin until FY2009.

Delays between authorization and disbursement meant that the ANSF force building effort only gathered full funding momentum in FY2010. As of the end of FY2012, SIGAR calculated that only \$38.14 billion of \$55.37 billion in authorized funds for the Afghan Security Force Fund (ASFF) – the chief source of force building money – had actually been disbursed. Actually manning the training bases really only took place in FY2010, and is still seriously short of qualified trainers.

The Need to Fund the Future

The key lesson for Congress, the Administration, and other donors should draw from this history – and from the collapse of Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces in Vietnam and of Najibullah's Afghan forces in the post-Soviet period – is that erratic funding resources for the ANSF and manning for trainer/partner roles are at best “force delayers” and at worst “force killers.” Resourcing the force is as important as shaping it and the same GAO report that provides the funding profile at the bottom of **Figure 20** warns that,³²

Our analysis shows that projected Afghan domestic revenues will be insufficient to cover the cost of ANSF through fiscal year 2015. Our analysis of DOD data estimates that the cost of continuing to build and sustain ANSF will be at least \$25 billion for fiscal years 2013 through 2017. Multiple factors are expected to influence the final cost of sustaining ANSF, including the size of the force—which is expected to decline, according to a preliminary model, from 352,000 to 228,500 by 2017—as well as planned reductions in infrastructure and training costs by 2014. According to DOD, continuous efforts are made to adjust ANSF capabilities and requirements to achieve cost reductions, including the Afghan First (the purchase of goods and services from Afghan producers) and Afghan Right (building and procuring items according to Afghan specifications) initiatives. At the Chicago Summit, the Afghan government pledged to devote at least \$500 million in 2015 and annually thereafter to funding ANSF, which is about 14 percent of its 2015 projected domestic revenues. However, even if the Afghan government committed 100percent of its projected domestic revenues to funding ANSF, this amount would cover only about 75 percent of the cost of supporting security forces in fiscal year 2015 and would leave the Afghan government no revenues to cover any non-security-related programs, such as public health.

³² *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 21.

At the Chicago Summit, the United States and its allies laid out a plan for future funding for ANSF; the U.S. annual contribution is projected to decline over time but still cover the majority of the costs. Our analysis shows that donors funded about 95 percent (\$33.7 billion) of Afghanistan's total security expenditures, with the United States funding approximately 91 percent (\$32.4 billion) of that amount from 2006 through 2011. On the basis of projections of U.S. and other donor support for ANSF for fiscal years 2012 through 2017, we estimate that there will be a gap each year from 2015 through 2017 between ANSF costs and donor pledges if additional contributions are not made (see fig. 7). According to State, excluding Afghan and U.S. funds, the international community has pledged over \$1 billion annually to support ANSF from 2015 through 2017.

In the same report the GAO also notes that,³³

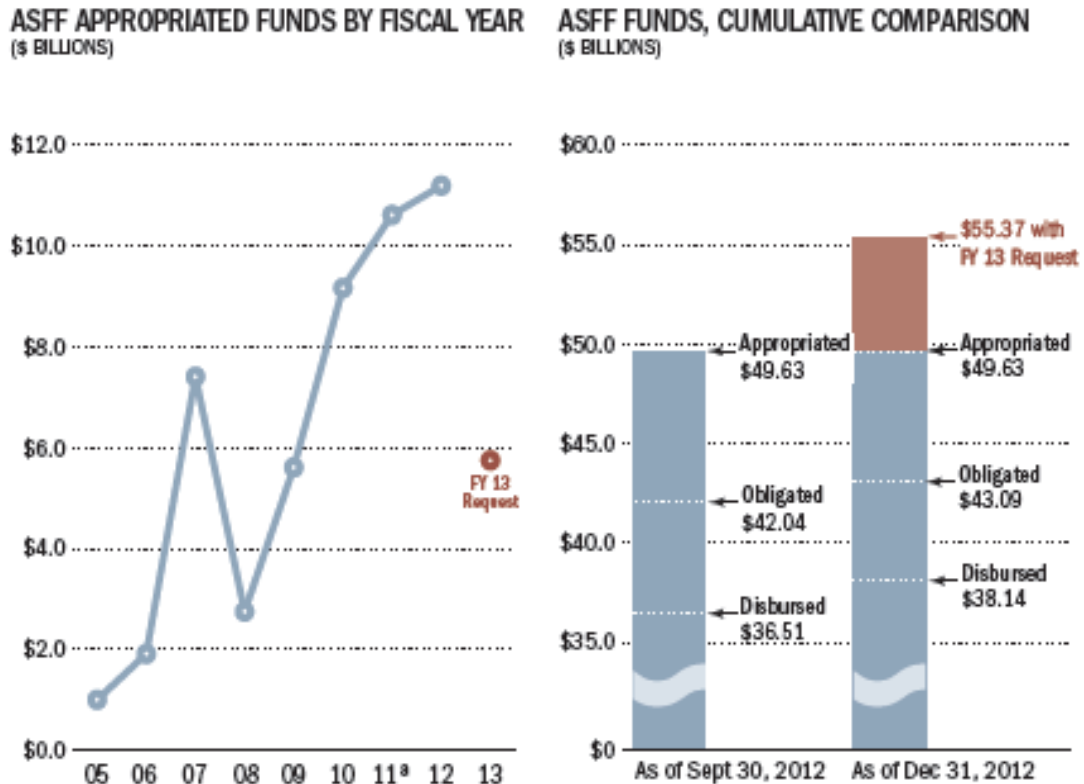
Although DOD has developed ANSF cost estimates beyond 2014, it has not provided its long-term cost estimates for sustaining ANSF in its semiannual reports to Congress. Our analysis of DOD data estimates the cost of continuing to support ANSF from 2013 through 2017 over \$25 billion, raising concerns about the sustainability of ANSF. We previously recommended, and Congress mandated, that DOD report to Congress about the long-term cost to sustain ANSF. While DOD's semiannual reports issued to date include information on current or upcoming fiscal year funding requirements for ANSF and donor contributions, estimates for long-term costs are absent. DOD stated that because the long-term ANSF cost estimates depend on a constantly changing operational environment, it provides cost information to Congress through briefings and testimony, as appropriate. This mechanism, however, does not allow for independent assessment of DOD's estimates to assist Congress as it considers future budget decisions.

Moreover, **Figure 21** warns just how sharply past funding estimates have been cut as Transition has proceeded while the ANSF has simultaneously been forced to rush increases in its size and capability. If the US wants the ANSF to be successful, it must be prepared to pay what it takes on a contingency basis for as long as it takes. This does not mean agreeing to an arbitrary \$4.1 billion a year, but it does mean agreeing to fund a credible Afghan force plan and being willing to adjust that funding at conditions-based levels. Moreover, funding the ANSF will be pointless if the US does not also ensure that enough civil aid will be available to keep the civil economy from gravely weakening or imploding as aid funds and outside military spending in-country is cut.

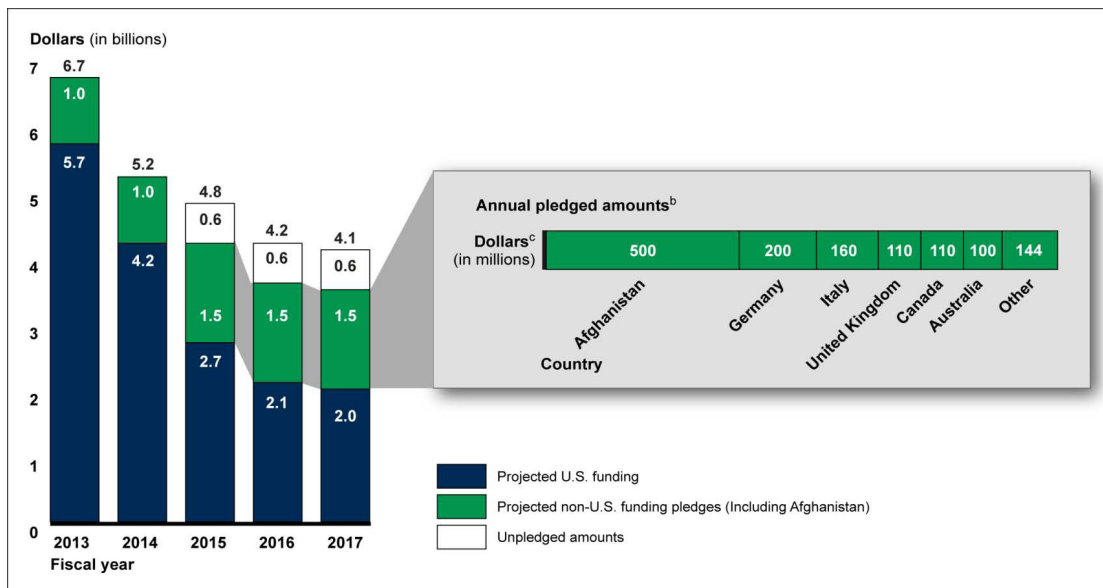
These are not casual issues even if one takes the most tolerant possible approach to defining "Afghanistan good enough." Progress in the ANA and other key elements of the ANSF is critical to every aspect of the economics of Transition. There are direct links between the capability of the ANA and the ability to secure traffic across the Pakistani border and along critical roads like the Afghan ring road that circulates the country.

Some Transition planning does tacitly assume that Afghanistan will be broadly secure at the end of 2014, and that there will be enough security to allow development and the relatively secure flow of trade. There is little evidence to date that such an assumption will be valid, and it seems even less likely if the US, other donors, and the Afghan government cannot create an effective army.

³³ *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 22.

Figure 20: Projected US and Other Donor Support for the ANSF

Source: *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, January 30, 2013, p. 58-59.



Source: GAO analysis of Departments of Defense and State data.

Source: *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, Government Accountability Office, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP, p. 21-22.

Figure 21: Major Questions for the Future: Force Expansion Under Massive Stress While Funding Plans Go Down

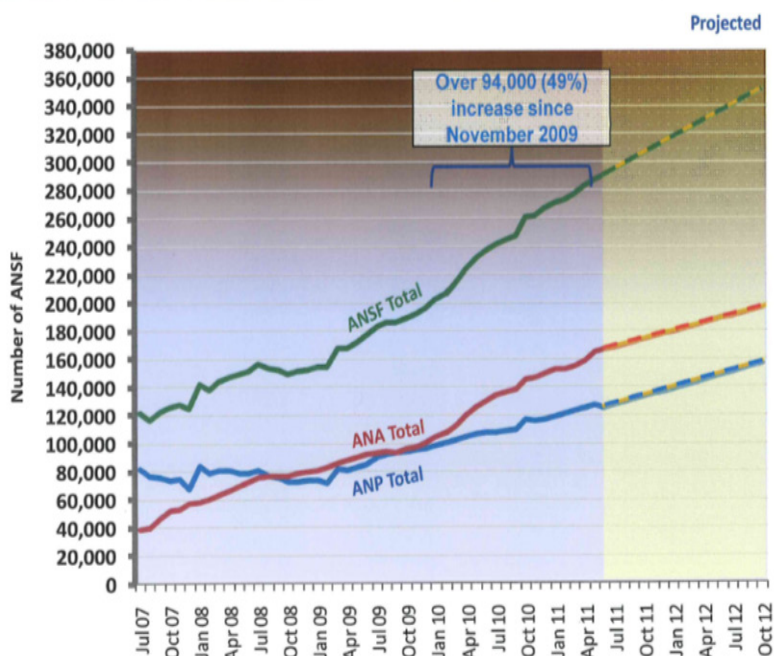
How \$5.5, \$7.1, and \$9.2 billion Became \$4.1 billion

PROJECTED ANSF EXPENDITURES, 2008/09–2023/24				
	2008/09 ^a	2013/14	2018/19	2023/24
Expenditures by Security Force (\$ BILLIONS)				
ANA ^b	\$3.2	\$3.8	\$5.0	\$6.5
ANP ^c	\$1.5	\$1.7	\$2.1	\$2.7
Total	\$4.7	\$5.5	\$7.1	\$9.2
Expenditures Relative to Revenues (PERCENT)				
ANSF Expenditures as a Share of Projected GIRoA Domestic Revenues	449%	270%	195%	154%

Notes: Numbers affected by rounding. Includes operating and investment expenditures.
a. Estimated actual.
b. World Bank Manpower Level Assumptions: ANA strength increases to 240,000 by 2012/13; ANP strength increases to 160,000 by 2013/14. These differ from the troop levels agreed to at the January 2010 London Conference, which were 171,600 for the ANA and 134,000 for the ANP by October 2011.
c. Macroeconomic assumptions: Afghanistan's long-term GDP growth rate averages 6% annually; inflation decreases to 3% in 2012/13 and beyond; GIRoA domestic revenue rises to 13% of GDP by 2028/29.
Sources: World Bank/DFID, "Afghanistan Public Expenditure Review 2010: Security Sector" pp. 23–24; DoD, "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," 4/2010, pp. 104, 115.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report, July 2010, p. 92-93

Rushing Force Expansion Beyond Capability



As of 7 May 2011

Source: ISAF, June 2011.

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28

Dealing with the ANSF as Another Uncertain Element of Transition

The ANSF seems to be making more progress in the field than some of the metrics used in assessing its progress in force generation would indicate. The ANA seems capable of handling much of the shift to independent operations by the end of 2014. The same is true of some elements of the ANP, and the ALP and local anti-Taliban forces are becoming a major new element of the ANSF.

Much depends, however, on Afghan government leadership and improvements in governance, economic aid and stability, and outside funding of the ANSF. Much also depends on US and allied willingness to provide trainers, partners, and emergency combat support and airpower.

Unless far more progress is made towards a real peace than now seems likely, the ANSF will be dependent on major outside training, partnering, and enabling efforts that last well beyond 2014 and possibly to 2020. This will be critical to give Afghan forces quality as well as quantity; limit the impact of corruption and power brokers; create an AAF that is not scheduled to have even basic force size and equipment before 2016; and give the Afghan Army the time necessary to build up its overall structure, command and control capability, infrastructure and sustainment capability, maintenance and other services.

Focusing on the Real-World Structure of the ANSF and Not Meaningless Manpower Totals

The future effectiveness of the ANSF has to be viewed in both political terms and by force elements. **Figure 22** summarizes their current and probable post-Transition capabilities in these terms and it should be clear that two sets of regular force elements – the ANA and the elite elements of the police like the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and SOFs – have a high probability of emerging as effective independent combat forces. Even if these forces are fully staffed at their peak-manning goal, they would only total some 186,503 men, or 53% of the goal of 352,000.

The differences between given elements of the ANSF are described in more detail later in this analysis. It is important, however, to realize that even the ANA and ANCOP forces will have serious problems in their future performance without effective Afghan political leadership and unity. Additionally, many – if not most – of the various other elements of the ANP are likely to remain problematic in terms of integrity, loyalty, and effectiveness well beyond 2014 and indefinitely into the future.

Figure 22 does also show that the 352,000-man force goal often referred to as the total ANSF does not include a goal of 30,000-40,000 ALP, 11,000-23,000 APPF personnel, at least several thousand Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS), and an unknown number of independent militia(s) – some of which do receive some form of government support. If these now transitional and uncertain programs go forward to their present goals, they would total 41,000 to 63,000 men, and represent highly political wild cards in the ANSF. At present, however, there is no clear way to rate them and it seems unlikely that neither the ALP nor APPF will emerge at the end of 2014 in their presently planned form.

Figure 22: The Power Structure of Afghan Forces During and After Transition in 2014

Force Element	Manpower		Current and Future Status
	Goal	Total % of ANSF	
MOD	NA	NA	The Ministry of Defense (MoD) has a reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but is to subject political influence and problems with favoritism and corruption in promotions and contracting. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early a date of does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, depend far more on post-2014 election leadership than training and readiness to assume effective management of ANA.
ANA	172,055	49%	The Afghan National Army (ANA) had 174,645 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It is a force that is still very much in transition with a growing number of effective combat elements (Kandaks = US battalions). It has seven corps the size of US divisions, a 12,525 man Special Operations Force, and 44,712 men (13% of entire ANSF) in support elements. Force development has been consistently rushed since 2009 and the goal of creating a mature force by end 2014 has been severely affected by problems in creating the MoD, a shortfall in the number of qualified trainers and partners, increases in the force goal levels and condensed timing for security transfer. The ANA has substantially less corruption than any element of ANSF other than ANCOP. But there are still problems and question about links of some elements to powerbrokers. Attrition and shortfalls in qualified officers and NCOs will remain problems through 2014. <i>May well be capable of forcing insurgents to stay out of critical populated areas, or at least marginalizing their influence if receive full funding, substantial US partnering and enabling during 2014-2017, if new Afghan president is effective leader, and if political and ethnic factions can achieve a working post2014 election modus vivendi.</i>
AAF	7,639	2%	The Afghan Air Force (AAF) had 5,872 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It has had major problems with development and corruption. It is not intended to be ready or self-sufficient before the end of 2016 and even then will have limited combat capability. This may make continued US air support critical through at least 2017 – a requirement that will continue to raise issues over civilian casualties and collateral damage.
ANA+AAF Subtotal	195,000	55%	
MOI	NA	NA	A reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but far more subject to political influence, problems with favoritism, and corruption in promotions and contracting than the MoD. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early if the MOI does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, again depend far more on post-2014 election leadership than training

and readiness to assume effective management of various elements of ANP, and the MoI will remain far more subject to outside political pressure than MoD.

ANCOP	14,451	4%	The Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is a relatively effective paramilitary force with 14,383 men assigned in Q4 2012. The ANCOP is the only element of ANP consistently capable of counterinsurgency operations. Currently loyal to central government, but has a high attrition rate and much depends on the next president.
AUP	110,279	31%	The Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) had 106,235 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The AUP are a deeply divided force with some good elements and many corrupt and ineffective elements tied to powerbrokers. There are some elements with probable links to insurgents and criminal networks. Operations are often very limited in Districts with significant insurgent elements. Lacks support of effective local government and other elements of justice system in many areas. There are major shortages in advisors and partners and many elements of the ANSF are unrated by. There is an uncertain overall ability to sustain readiness and training levels, pay, and selection and promotion by merit if advisors phase down. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.
ABP	23,090	7%	The Afghan Border Police (ABP) had 21,928 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The force had some good elements, and others that were corrupt, but actively fought or resisted insurgents. However, there are many corrupt and ineffective elements operating as local power brokers or tied to powerbrokers. Often guilty of extortion in AOR or at checkpoints, and sometimes seizure of boys. Some elements with links to criminal networks and working arrangements with insurgents. Serious problem in terms of lost government revenues because of corruption. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.
ANP Subtotal	157,000	45%	
CNPA	2,986?	0.8%	The Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan are a small force that had 2,581 men assigned in Q4 2012. They are a small force charged with helping to implement a large program that has cost some \$6.1 billion since 2002. Their effectiveness is unclear, and as is the broader role of the ANSF – which often does not operate in key narcotic growing areas, or has tailored eradication to support given power brokers and respond to bribes. The overall effort has had little impact since 2010, although disease and drought have affected total production. UNDOC estimates that the area under cultivation increased from 131,000 hectares in 2011 to 154,000 in 2012, and major increases took place in southern areas under Taliban influence.
Total ANSF	352,000	100%	
ALP	30,000-40,000	NA	A force very much in development and manned at only 16,474 in December 2012 with enough problems and links to Taliban so that SOJTF was re-validated manning. However, it has shown that

elements have been effective where Afghan, US, and other special forces or high quality trainers are present and efforts to improve local security maintain links to the ANP/MoI are supported by governance and development activity like the Village Stability Operations. Recruiting and manning has largely tribal elements, many with ties to local power brokers and some with past ties to insurgent elements. Can potentially be a critical element in limiting insurgent presence or control, but can easily break up or change sides as outside advisors withdraw or if the central government lacks unity and leadership.

APPF	11,000-23,000	NA	In theory, the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) will replace private security companies (PSCs) with an 11,000-23,000 man government run security force with 270-445 sites. The PSC do present major problems in terms of ties to power brokers, corruption, high cost, failure to provide effective security, and de facto deals with insurgents to permit movement and cargo transfers rather than providing actual security. The creation of the APPF, however, is more a Karzai power grab than a real security reform. The APPF has fallen far behind the goal of replacing PSCs this year, future capability is highly uncertain, and is likely to be loyal to the highest bidder in a post-2014 environment.
Militias	NA	NA	There is no meaningful unclassified data on their number and strength, but they range from small local elements to significant forces and often play a key role in local security, or in supporting power brokers. Little or no real loyalty to government; and often exploit and abuse power, are corrupt, tied to criminal networks, or make deals with insurgents. As much of a threat to unity and effective governance as a check on insurgents.
National Directorate of Security (NDS)	15,000-30,000		The NDS (Amniyat or Amaniyat) is an intelligence service reporting to the president. It has paramilitary elements and some elite counterterrorism forces. These forces are now more effective in supporting ISAF counterterrorism operations than in provide the intelligence, planning, and force management capabilities needs to operate on their own.

Source: SIGAR *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, p. 79, 84, 87 and show authorized totals as of Q4 2012.

The Effective “Regular” Force Is Likely to Be Closer to 240,000 Than 352,000

ISAF and its training mission, the National Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A), have made major progress in developing the Afghan forces since 2009, and some aspects of this progress have accelerated over time. As **Figure 24** shows, it may be possible to expand the different elements of the ANSF to over 352,000 personnel during the period of Transition.

As of March 2013, this force was to have the following order of battle:³⁴

- 6 Corps headquarters
- 24 infantry brigades
- 2 light armor brigades
- 2 special operations commands
- 4 air wings (1 special operations)
- 6 Civil Order Police (ANCOP) brigades

This is uncertain, however, given the current problems with attrition, retention, and desertion shown in **Figure 23** and the figures that follow. There is a lack of suitable numbers of expert outside trainers and uncertainty as to whether the funding will be available in the Transition period to field so large a mix of military and police forces for any length of time.

Moreover, if the US, other outside donors, and the Afghan government are to use their resources effectively, they will need to focus on the key elements of the ANSF – The ANA, the AAF, ANCOP, ALP, and key militias. The total effective force is never going to be close to 351,000. It will be closer to 200,000 ANA and elite ANP plus some 30,000-45,000 ALP and militia.

Nevertheless, many experts in ISAF and its training branch – NTM-A – believe the result will be a force that can actually fight and hold against insurgents and maintain national unity if they have effective leadership. At the same time, many elements of the force will have to deal with political interference, corruption, and commanders who either profiteer or act on their own. They will also have to deal with issues like the fact that only some 220,000 ANSF had received literacy training, according to a January 2013 Congressional Research Service (CRS) report. Overall, 70% of the ANSF had a first-grade literacy or above, although this compares favorably with only 14% in 2009.³⁵

The DoD’s 1230 Report issued in December 2012 highlighted the difference between the 352,000 total and the strength of the forces that can deal with a serious ongoing insurgent threat,³⁶

³⁴ ISAF expert, March 2013.

³⁵ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service 7-5700, January 4, 2013, p. 32-33.

³⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 45-46.

The ANSF met its goal of recruiting a force of approximately 352,000 Soldiers and Police by October 1, 2012. The current recruited strength of the Army is 195,000. The Police force stands at more than 157,000 recruited. The Army and Police personnel not currently in training or fielded units are recruited and awaiting induction at the training centers. The ANA is scheduled to achieve its surge-level end-strength of 187,000 soldiers inducted by December 2012, and to have these personnel trained, equipped, and fielded by December 2013. The ANP is expected to reach its surge-level end-strength of 157,000 personnel inducted by February 2013, and to have these personnel trained, equipped, and fielded by December 2013. The AAF is expected to reach its goal of 8,000 airmen inducted in December 2014, and to have these personnel trained, equipped, and fielded by December 2017. As a result of the significant increase in the size of the ANSF, Afghans now constitute more than two-thirds of all those in uniform in Afghanistan.

The DoD report also warned that,³⁷

Despite progress, corruption remains a critical issue, especially in the MoI, Afghan Border Police, and the Afghan Air Force – a condition that threatens to undermine public perception of the security ministries and ANSF as capable and legitimate security providers for Afghanistan.

The Afghan Parliament's vote of "no confidence" in the MoI and MoD ministers in mid-August 2012 and President Karzai's subsequent replacement of the head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) have further stressed the security ministries, slowing progress in some areas. All ministries, however, exhibited sufficient institutional cohesion to withstand these changes at the minister level. ANSF will continue to face significant challenges to its growth and development; including attrition, leadership deficits (including Non-Commissioned Officer shortages in both the ANA and ANP), and limited capabilities in staff planning, management, logistics, and procurement.

The ANSF also continues to require enabling support from Coalition resources, including air (both transport and close air support), logistics, ISR17, counter-IED, and medical evacuation support.

The January 2013 SIGAR report also noted progress in meeting the desired Manning levels,³⁸

As of November 21, 2012, CSTC-A reported ANSF force strength as 331,597: 174,645 ANA, 151,080 ANP, and 5,872 Afghan Air Force, as shown in Table 3.2. This total—which also includes personnel in training—is more than 20,000 personnel fewer than the October 2012 end-strength goal for the ANSF, but is on track to meet the approved end-strength goal of 352,000 by December 2014. However, as noted in previous SIGAR quarterly reports, the number of forces assigned does not necessarily equal the number of personnel present for duty (see "ANA Strength" in this section).

But the SIGAR report also warned,³⁹

Determining ANSF strength is fraught with challenges. U.S. and coalition forces rely on the Afghan forces to report their own personnel strength numbers. Moreover, the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) noted that, in the case of the Afghan National Army, there is "no viable method of validating [their] personnel numbers." SIGAR will continue to follow this issue to determine whether U.S. financial support to the ANSF is based on accurately reported personnel numbers.

A realistic assessment of both the current and future ANSF needs to be based largely on independent assessments of each layer of the ANSF and its capability in a given area and in dealing with a given insurgent threat. The active combat arms will include the army –

³⁷ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 46-47.

³⁸ SIGAR Report to Congress, January 30, 2013, p. 73-74.

³⁹ SIGAR Report to Congress, January 30, 2013, p. 73-74.

which still has major problems with attrition and training – and eventually the air force. It will exclude most of the police other than elite forces like the ANCOP. The rest of the police will play more of a holding role, although there will be more capable elements within each force.

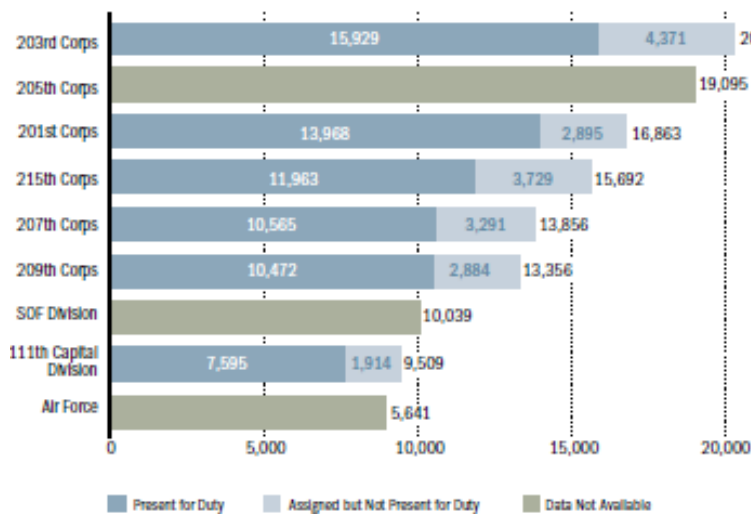
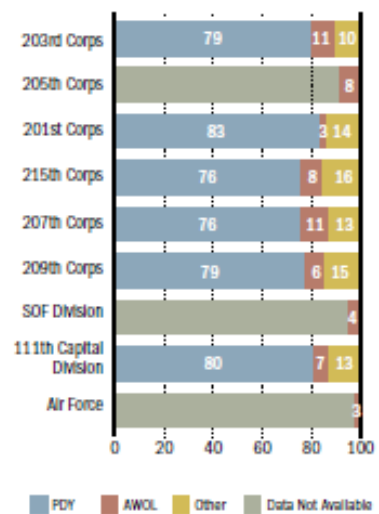
The ALP will play a local holding role in troubled areas where the Afghan population is willing to actively resist the insurgency, but much will depend on the outside support it gets during 2013-2014. This will be even more important if President Karzai succeeds in putting an end to the US SOF training of the ALP – a demand he made in January 2013.

Figure 23: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part One

As of April 30, 2012

ANSF FORCE STRENGTH AGAINST TARGET GOALS

Priority	Targets	Status	Change Since Last Quarter
Afghan National Army	195,000 troops by 10/2012	187,874 personnel (as of 3/2012)	+11,520
Afghan National Police	157,000 personnel by 10/2012	149,642 personnel (as of 3/2012)	+5,845

ANA PERSONNEL STRENGTH, SELECTED COMPONENTS, ON MARCH 12, 2012**ANA PERSONNEL PRESENCE, SELECTED COMPONENTS, ON MARCH 12, 2012 (PERCENT)****ANP FORCE STRENGTH, MARCH 2012**

	Authorized (Tashkil)	Assigned to Tashkil Positions	Not Assigned to Tashkil Positions
ANP (Total Strength: 149,642^a)	140,579^b	140,947^c	8,695^d
Breakdown By ANP Component			
AUP	80,275	84,006	—
ABP	23,086	22,222	—
ANCOP	13,678	16,460	—
Other Units	23,540 ^e	22,637 ^f	—

Notes: AUP = Afghan Uniform Police. ABP = Afghan Border Police. ANCOP = Afghan National Civil Order Police. — = not available.

a. Does not include traffic and fire units.

b. Includes authorized AUP/ABP and ANCOP personnel in addition to authorized personnel for MoI headquarters, anti-crime, training, counter-narcotics, traffic, medical, intelligence, and fire units.

c. Includes personnel authorized for or assigned to MoI headquarters, anti-crime, training, counter-narcotics, traffic, medical, intelligence, and fire units.

d. Students enrolled in initial entry training programs and officer graduates.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, April 30, 2012, p. 69, 71, 75.

Figure 23: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part Two**As of November 2012**

ANSF ASSIGNED PERSONNEL STRENGTH, NOVEMBER 21, 2012			
ANSF Component	Current Target	Status as of 11/2012	Difference Between Current Strength and October 2012 Target End-Strength Goals
Afghan National Army (Including Afghan Air Force)	195,000 ^a	180,517	-14,483
Afghan National Police	157,000 ^a	151,080	-5,920
ANSF Total	352,000	331,597^b	-20,403

^a By October 2012^b Includes 2,581 CNPA PersonnelSource: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 73.

Uncertain Metrics for Shaping the Force

As yet, there are no unclassified ratings of combat capability versus metrics that focus on force generation measures like training and readiness or vague definitions of the capability to be “in the lead.” Furthermore, the basic metrics that are now available are increasingly suspect, as the US and coalition forces rely on the ANSF to report personnel strength, with no viable method of validation.

It is also unclear how such metrics have handled the problem of attrition. Approximately 35% of the ANSF has not re-enlisted in recent years, creating a yearly recruiting need equal to one-third of the existing force.⁴⁰ At least in the ANA, soldiers have often taken long trips home due to the fact that they do not serve in the provinces in which they live and there has been no system for leave and training and recuperation. This is now changing with the goal of rotating forces through regular combat, leave, and training cycles but it is too soon to estimate how well such changes will work over time.

Deserters or other soldiers who leave the ANSF after their contracts expire are not processed out of the personnel system in a timely manner and civilians are often included in counts of ANSF personnel. In addition, the number of forces assigned is not necessarily the same as the number of present for duty. For example, within the main combat forces only 62.3-80.4% were present for duty, while 84% of AAF personnel were present for duty according to a January 2013 CRS report.⁴¹

It is also important to note that the current manpower goals were formed before the current pace of transition became clear and do not seem to be related to any current assessment of the threat posed by a guesstimate of some 5,000-6,000 hard-core insurgents and 25,000-35,000 other full and part-time insurgents.

No effort has been made public that ties the current force goals for the ANSF to a current or projected threat estimate, or tries to measure the effectiveness of the program in net assessment terms. No public effort has been made to explain the relative priority of the military or police, or to tie the goals for and growth of the police to the other elements of the justice system and governance. The focus is almost exclusively on force generation versus force capability in the field, and on manpower totals regardless of capability.

In any case, successful Transition will also depend more on creating a force that is affordable and effective than one that is large. **Figure 24** shows a broad estimate of the past US aid spending on the ANSF and the steady declines in funding plans for its future. It is another warning that while the most critical problems in the ANSF may be solvable with time, advisors, and funds, it is very unlikely that this can happen until well after the end of 2014, and far from clear that the ANSF can survive the politics and funding cuts of Transition.

Due to funding considerations, some recent NATO plans have talked about a future force level of 228,000 and a yearly budget of around \$4.1 billion. It seems that ISAF is now hoping to keep the ANSF at 352,000 through 2018 at a probable yearly cost of \$4.8 to

⁴⁰ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service 7-5700, January 4, 2013, p. 32, 35.

⁴¹ SIGAR Quarterly Report, January 30, 2012. p. 74, 80.

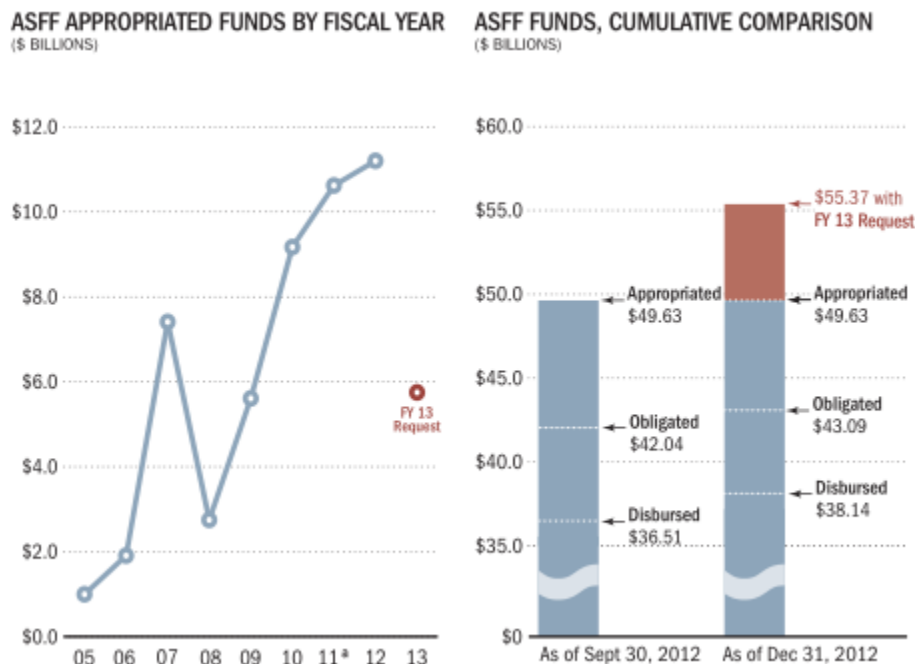
nearly \$6 billion. Currently, recruitment, training, equipping, and operating the ANSF costs about \$6.5 billion; the Afghan government provides \$500 million of that, the international community \$300 million, and the US pays the remaining \$5.7 billion.⁴²

This is not the way to approach a Transition that will withdraw most outside support to the ANSF by the end of 2014. There needs to be a much clearer set of plans for force development, outside aid, and funding that goes at least five years in the future (2014-2018). Such plans will need to be regularly adjusted to fit events, but there needs to be a far clearer picture of what plans will be actually put into practice, how the combat capabilities of the current force goals will be developed, what budget will actually be available, and how much the Afghan government can spend of its own revenue.

There also needs to be slack in such plans and funding. The security situation remains unpredictable, as do the challenges posed by peace negotiations, hampering any attempts at future force planning. In particular, the police effort presents special problems because of corruption and because it is being developed without a matching real-world justice system and Afghan government presence in the field.

The ANSF must also be ready to deal with the fact that the US and its allies may not be willing to fully fund all the necessary development and support efforts after 2014 and for as long as it takes after this time to achieve lasting security.

⁴² Thom Shanker, "NATO Plan Tries to Avoid Sweeping Cuts in Afghan Troops," *New York Times*, February 21, 2013.

Figure 24: ANSF Funding Levels: Past and Projected**Major Past and Current US Spending on ANSF**

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, May 2011, p. 58.

Pre-Transition Plans for All ANSF Aid Spending During 2013-2024

PROJECTED ANSF EXPENDITURES, 2008/09–2023/24				
	2008/09 ^a	2013/14	2018/19	2023/24
Expenditures by Security Force (\$ BILLIONS)				
ANA ^b	\$3.2	\$3.8	\$5.0	\$6.5
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Total	\$4.7	\$5.5	\$7.1	\$9.2
Expenditures Relative to Revenues (PERCENT)				
ANSF Expenditures as a Share of Projected GIRoA Domestic Revenues				
	449%	270%	195%	154%

Notes: Numbers affected by rounding. Includes operating and investment expenditures.
a. Estimated actual.
b. World Bank Manpower Level Assumptions: ANA strength increases to 240,000 by 2012/13; ANP strength increases to 160,000 by 2013/14. These differ from the troop levels agreed to at the January 2010 London Conference, which were 171,600 for the ANA and 134,000 for the ANP by October 2011.
c. Macroeconomic assumptions: Afghanistan's long-term GDP growth rate averages 6% annually; inflation decreases to 3% in 2012/13 and beyond; GIRoA domestic revenue rises to 13% of GDP by 2028/29.
Sources: World Bank/DfID, "Afghanistan Public Expenditure Review 2010: Security Sector" pp. 23–24; DoD, "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," 4/2010, pp. 104, 115.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, May 2011, p. 50.

Measuring Progress in Force Generation

More broadly, it is time to accept the fact that whatever emerges after 2015 will almost certainly involve serious Afghan-made changes in the detailed force generation plans that exist today. The present force-generation exercise is being driven by pressures that mean further change is almost inevitable:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule-of-law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real-world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduce the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning that are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- These involve cuts in trainers and advisors from some 36 troop contributing nations (2/3s US), from current totals of some 4,000 trainer/advisors and 1,000 contractors in 79 sites in 21 provinces – plus two host countries – to a much smaller number in what may be four major trainer/advisor/partner enable facilities in “four corners” of the country and continued support to the ANA at the corps level. It could even be reduced to a presence in Kabul focused largely on advice to the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoIA), and the projection of enablers and support from the capital.
- Reductions in out-year annual cost from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in Capability Milestone (CM) and Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) performance standards and goals to be followed by new Afghan systems.

At the same time, these problems need to be kept in careful perspective. The insurgent threat already is far weaker than the ANSF, and a lot can be accomplished even by the end of 2014. A limited continuing US and allied presence and a steady flow of aid may be able to do a great deal after 2014, and the Afghans may often be able to “do it their way” at much lower cost and without meeting NTM-A and ISAF goals and standards.

What is striking in view of all the pressures to rush ANSF development is not the fact that the ANSF is far from perfect and will have serious weaknesses and flaws well beyond 2014, but it is rather how much progress has actually been made in force generation to date. **Figure 25** summarizes this progress in terms of manpower, units, and equipment.

It is clear that although many key specialties and elements of sustainment are still lacking even within the ANA, there may be enough resources for the Afghan government to maintain security in some form through and after Transition. But this will depend on if it

has effective leadership, enough outside aid, and a sufficient number of US enablers to give key elements of the ANSF enough time to become effective.

The MoD and the MoIA

That said, there are certain realities about the future force-generation effort that the US, its allies, and the Afghan government will have to accept. One is that the current goals for developing the MoD and MoIA will inevitably be shaped by the political tensions and forces that grow out of the shifts in power resulting from the 2014 election, and some aspects of the plans for each ministry are too ambitious and Western-oriented to survive engagement with reality. Both ministries will steadily become more “Afghan” as outside forces withdraw, will be caught up in Afghan power politics, and significant levels of corruption will take place.

The realities involved are already outlined in DoD and SIGAR reporting, and are discussed in detail in the sections that follow on the ANA and ANP.⁴³ The more the US phases forces and advisors out and the more Afghan politics become caught up in the full impact of Transition, the more Afghans will do it their way. As the key continuing source of funds and advisors, the US must be ready to accept this, and it must judge success on the basis of the level of security and stability the ANSF can prove and not by either US standards or whether the MoD and MoIA come to operate as currently planned.

⁴³ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, p. 78-79; Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (the 1230 Report), December 2012, p. 47-52.

Figure 25: ANSF Development – Institutional Metrics and Benchmarks

Category	Metric	Sep-11	Feb-12	Mar-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
Recruit	ANSF End Strength	305,000	330,014	332,750	337,187	349,000
Train	ANA trained in specialty	10%	35%	30%	39%	40%
	ANP patrolmen trained	67%	76%	75%	75%	90%
	AAF Courses	C-27 IQT Started	Basic RW & FW Start 18 Feb	Basic RW & FW course	Mi-17 IQT started on 15 Sep 12	Mi-17 IQT
Fielding	New ANA unit manning	80%	87%	85%	92%	90%
	CS Kandaks fielded	68%	82%	86%	92%	100%
	MP Coys** fielded		64%	79%	100%	100%
	Engineer Kandaks fielded		-		-	14%
	RCCs fielded	82%	92%	95%	92%	100%
	Signal (Coys) fielded		14%	14%	-	29%
	MI Kandaks fielded		-		-	
	MSF Kandaks fielded		-		29%	20%
Equip the Force	ANA Fielded unit equipment fill	80%	84%	83%	90%	86%
	ANP Unit & District equipment fill	70%	71%	80%	89%	90%
Develop the Force	ANSF Level 1 Literacy		61%	57%	73%	65%
	ANA Instructors assigned & trained (T2I)	20%	63%	65%	80%	
	ANP Assistant Instructor and Instructor positions filled	40%	50%	45%	54%	50%
Leader Development	New ANA officers with Branch School training	15%	100%	52%	100%	
	Junior NCOs trained	72%	67%	67%	75%	75%
	AAF officer & NCO positions filled	88%	68%	68%	75%	74%
	ANP NCO Positions Filled	60%	74%	65%	80%	70%
	MoD and GS ministerial departments at CM-1B*		9%	23%	16%	30%
Transition the Force	MoI ministerial departments at CM-1B*		2	2	2	9
	ANA training institutions transitioned		-	9%	38%	42%
	ANP training institutions transitioned		-		15%	25%
	ANA Regional Logistics Support Commands at FOC		6 IOC	6 IOC	6 IOC	

“* Data as of June 30. CM ratings are assessed quarterly, with the next assessment to be conducted at the end of September.

** Coys are the Afghan equivalent of Companies

IOC – Initial Operational Capability

FOC– Full Operational Capability”

Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (the 1230 Report), December 2012, p. 95.

Shaping the ANA: The Core of Afghan Mission-Capable Forces

Success in meeting the security challenges of transition will not be determined by the overall level of progress in the ANSF. It will be determined by concentrating resources on the key force elements – like the ANA, elite police elements like the ANCOP, ALP, and key militias – that can actually deal with serious insurgent threats and trying to create local security forces with some ties to the government in “Kabulstan” that can deter or contain extremist elements in the field.

This means the US and its allies must be prepared to support the ANA and ANCOP forces where they still have serious shortfalls in areas like sustainment and intelligence for at least several years after 2014. The US must also tolerate the fact that at least parts of the ANP and the local forces that emerge by the end of 2014 will often come under power broker and tribal control. This must be justified on the basis of being better than the Taliban and Haqqani Network than anything approaching the kind of force that the US might desire under more ideal circumstances.

Here it is important to note that DoD reports that the ANA still has several serious problems that will need advisory support and enablers until the ANA is truly ready to stand on its own. These include a mix of key “enablers”: fire and air support, intelligence, Medevac and medical care, planning and managing campaigns and corps size operations, maintenance systems, and large-scale logistics and sustainment capabilities. The ANA also faces the problem that the AAF will not be ready or capable before the end of 2016 at the earliest, and at some point it will need help in developing “conventional” defense capabilities that match its growing counterinsurgency capabilities.

At the same time, the US and ISAF must be ready to deal with the fact that the success or failure of the ANA and every element of the ANSF will become sharply more dependent on the Afghans’ ability to depart from many aspects of the current US-ISAF-developed plan as more forces are withdrawn, money and advisors are cut, and Afghans adapt to doing things “the Afghan way.” Sticking with the plan is not a meaningful objective. Helping the Afghans as they adapt to doing it their way is.

The Near-Term Problem of Attrition

There is an immediate problem that urgently needs to be solved by fully implementing reforms like the new rotation cycle being adopted in the Afghan National Army Special Forces (ANASF) that will give units leave rather than exhaust them in the field, and put them on a regular rotation of combat, leave, and training and regrouping.

Burning units out by leaving the best units constantly in the field and far from home is the last way to develop a sustainable ANA. As experts from NTMA-A and a variety of advisors and partners make clear, the ANA must move forward in developing rotation cycles, career paths, and leave policies that will deal with all of the causes of the relatively high levels of attrition (roughly 3% per month), high absent without official

leave (AWOL) rates, and a shortfall of some 7,100 non-commissioned officers (NCOs) that have been problems in the past.⁴⁴

The DoD reported in detail on these latter problems in December 2012. The levels of attrition remained high – including an 8%-per-month loss in officer training and major NCO shortfalls, *and it is striking that the DoD report made it clear that the ANA manpower totals included in the 352,000 force total were being reassessed and would probably be changed*,⁴⁵

The current approved end-strength for the ANA – the projected end-strength required to support transition to Afghan security lead – is 352,000 personnel by December 2014, comprising 187,000 for the Army by December 2012, 157,000 for the Police by February 2013, and 8,000 for the Afghan Air Force by December 2014.

As of the end of the reporting period, the overall ANA force level reached 182,209 personnel; this number is 12,257 lower than the force level reported at the end of the previous reporting period in March 2012. However, this reflects an accounting change that no longer includes Air Force and MoD civilian personnel with the reported Army component strength.

Although attrition levels exceeded the monthly goal of 1.4 percent each month during the reporting period, strong recruiting and retention efforts, which both exceeded their goals every month, contributed to the solid overall end-strength figures.

The main causes of attrition and low retention are poor leadership and accountability, separation from family, denial of leave or poor leave management, high operational tempo, and ineffective deterrence against soldiers going absent without leave (AWOL). The Attrition Working Group, made up of ANA, NTM-A, and IJC officials, continues to monitor and assess these trends in order to determine causes and potential solutions to reduce the overall attrition rate. Should the attrition rates consistently fail to meet target levels, there is a risk that training costs will compromise the Afghan government's ability to maintain the 195,000 force. Consistently high attrition may also negatively affect ANSF capabilities, as a high number of soldiers will have to be recruited and trained each year, resulting in a force composed of many inexperienced soldiers.

NTM-A and the MoD also maintained efforts to recruit southern Pashtuns as well as improve the overall ethnic balance of the ANA. Using the MoD and NTM-A-agreed definition for Southern Pashtuns...this ethnic segment made up 13 percent of enlisted recruits during the Solar Month of August. Increases in the percentage of Hazara soldiers at the *Kandak* level slowed as the ANA approached their ethnic targeting goals.

As the ANA reaches its ultimate end-strength authorization, future recruiting figures are being monitored to assess how the ANA is balancing recruiting with attrition in order to stay within the approved authorization level of 195,000 personnel (including 8,000 AAF). Additionally, ANA training has started to focus more on quality than quantity, in accordance with ANSF development plans.

Future force levels of the ANA are pending final determination through ongoing discussions between the U.S. government, the Afghan government, and the international community. Considerations include the required size and capabilities of the ANSF to maintain security following Transition, the capacity of the Afghan government to fund its security forces, and the ability of the international community to contribute.

...growing the required number of NCOs for the ANA remains challenging. The SY 1391 Tashkil authorizes the ANA 64,132 NCO positions. In order to address current NCO shortfall, an additional 7,093 are required. The plan to address the NCO shortfall emphasizes developing an

⁴⁴ The key problems in the ANA are summarized in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 55-57, 60.

⁴⁵ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan* (the 1230 Report), December 2012, p. 56-57

experienced NCO corps by promoting from within the ranks. The shortage of NCOs will gradually be reduced through 2014, as experienced, qualified soldiers are identified, trained, and promoted.

Accordingly, it is almost certainly far more important for anyone assessing the probable success of the ANSF in broad terms to focus on the key areas where there are measured shortfalls that have an obvious impact on security levels rather than scoring of unit elements using systems like the CM and CUAT systems.

The Longer-Term Need for Patience and Continuing Outside Support in Building the MoD, ANA, and AAF

The mid- and longer-term problems in the ANA are shaped more by the effort to rush forward to its current force goals than by its inherent limitations. The US and ISAF are pushing too hard to get too much done too soon to meet a political deadline for withdrawal. As a result, they have tended to focus on the real progress the ANA is making, and not on the risks that this progress could badly regress if sufficient outside aid and support is not continued well after 2014, and cannot possibly produce a fully ready ANA by the end of 2014.

One basic problem in a military culture is that it tends to embrace the mission and try to make it work even when it faces serious risks and needs to sound a clear warning about the limitations of what can be accomplished. This has not been helped – at least in the case of the US – by a deeply divided White House, political pressure to rush forward and produce rapid reductions, and uncertain leadership and decision-making in deciding what level of effort can be sustained after 2014.

It also has not been helped by ISAF's past obsession with reporting "good news," exaggerating progress, and understanding problems and risks. So many claims are made about progress in the Afghan regular forces that it is important to put them in perspective by highlighting the other aspects of reporting that focus on the challenges that still affect even key elements of the regular forces like the MoD, ANA, AAF, and ALP. The MoD is critical because the ANA will depend upon it to function fully as an independent military.

Dealing with Key Force-Building Challenges

Even the ANA, the most competent of the ANSFs, has serious limits that will require aid and enablers beyond 2014. The DoD 1230 Report of December 2012 does identify many areas of progress in the MoD and ANA. Nevertheless, such progress needs to be kept in perspective. There is only one year until Transition and the report identifies many areas of continuing challenges that make current transfer plans seem more cosmetic than real. It is unlikely that the ANA will be able to stand on its own before 2016 without more funding and advisory/partnering support than current plans seem to call for.

The scale of the problems involved as summarized in **Figure 26** to **Figure 29**:

- **Figure 26 shows the pace of the buildup in manpower and the level of problems in attrition and turnover that still need to be addressed.** It should be stressed that the goal is not to meet the total in manpower, but to create a stable manpower base with training and steadily more experienced officers and manpower. Like all other aspects of the sometimes mindless race to 352,000, quantity per se rarely tells in the combat performance of an inexperienced and half-formed force. Quality always does.

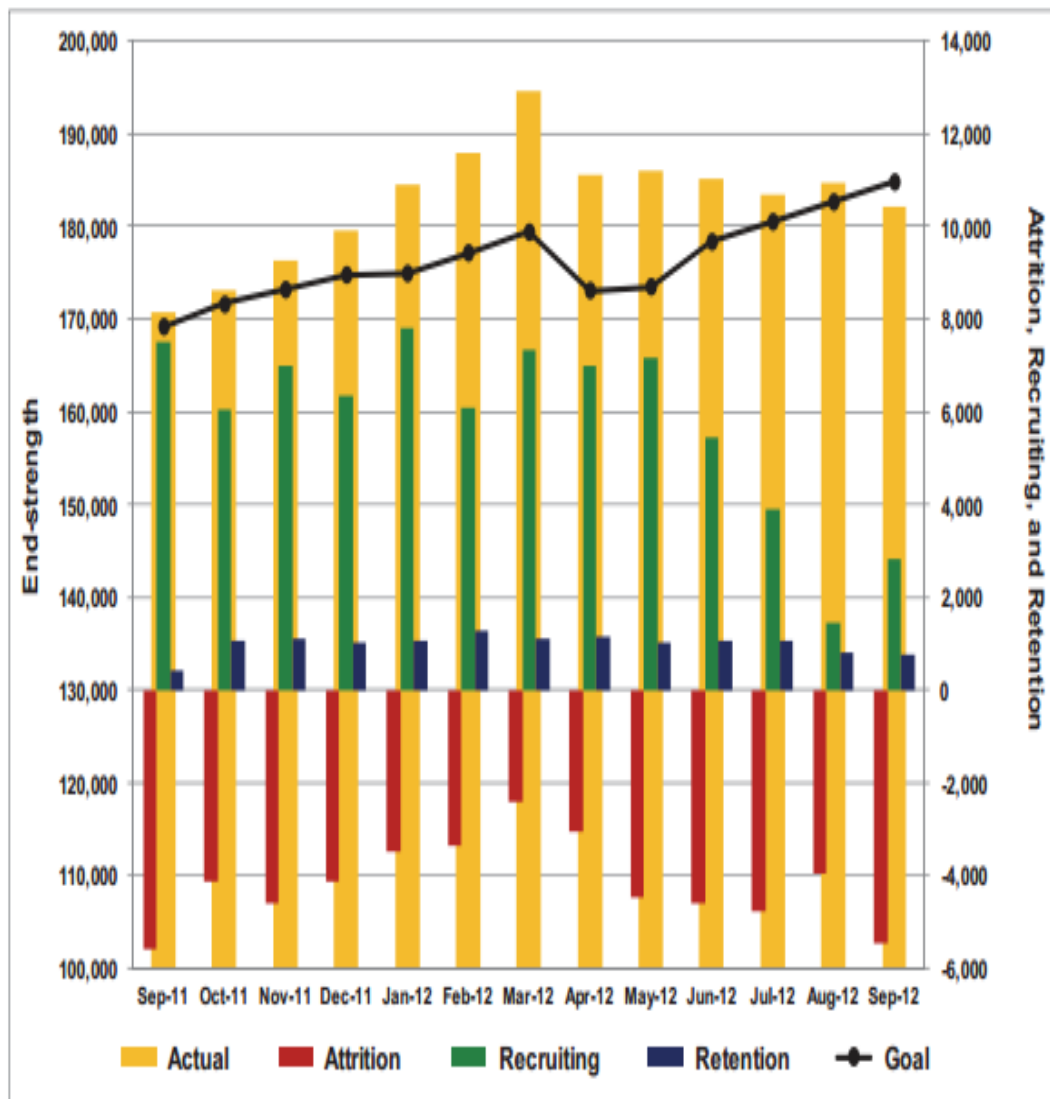
- **Figure 27 highlights the progress in manning by corps and equipment.** It is critical to understand that the ANA will just have completed transfer to full corps-level operations by the end of 2104 under the best conditions. The ANA will succeed or fail at the military level largely at the corps level – although adequate higher headquarters and command support, and logistics and enablers, will be critical as well.

The ANA will need outside advisors and partners at least at the Corps level through 2016 to 2018, and help in dealing with problem brigades and any military emergency. In practice, trying to do this from Kabul, rather than keeping presence at the Corps level – with at least several facilities in the “four corners” of the country – is a recipe for exceptional risk. It takes presence to have suitable situational awareness and understanding, as well as personal relationships and credibility. The failure to understand this, and act on that understanding, could cripple the key force element of the ANSF during the critical first years after 2014.

- **As for equipment, the costs shown in Figure 27 are scarcely a measure of progress and the ANA is almost certain to have several years to half a decade in which it will need logistics push, and equipment resupply and replacement to make up for its problems in logistics and maintenance.** The ANA does need “tough love” to push it into self-reliance, but “tough love” does not consist of letting it walk off a cliff as a learning experience. It is also clear that the present equipment mix and tables of organization and equipment (TO&Es) will not survive engagement with reality, will evolve to absorb the equipment the US and its allies leave behind, and must adapt to suit Afghan experience versus US and ISAF theory.
- **Figure 28 reinforces the warning given earlier about the MoD and MoIA: These remain major challenges in force building and will remain so through at least 2016-2018.** Even if one could ignore the reality that Afghan politics tend to be a blood sport, the uncertain leadership that may emerge after 2014, the risk of some eventual move towards a coup, corruption and the impact of political power brokers, and ethnic/sectarian/tribal divisions – there would still be a major lack of experience and professional competence and a need to create and adapt planning and management systems through the MoD.
- **Figure 29 shows the relative level of progress in force building using force-generation metrics that are now an increasingly poor measures of future combat capability.** The CUAT and CM force rating systems shown in **Figure 28** and **Figure 29** are not without value, but they are largely measures of whether a force has been generated with all of the previous measures and can meet some kind of limited test for independent combat operations. Historically, they are very limited indicators of how well a given force does in combat over time.
- **The CUAT and CM systems can penalize a force element for shortfalls that a well-led unit can overcome in the field and/or give another unit credit for temporary success.** In the real-world, the ANA will develop a mixed order of battle after 2014, with some very good units, some adequate units, and some bad ones. Sustained stress or combat will be the test and not the current rating systems, and politics and power brokering will steadily emerge as major forces in ANA behavior unless Afghanistan gets better national leadership than currently seems likely. The US and other ISAF countries need to help the ANA through this period. Given recent progress, the odds of success seem substantially better than they did in the summer of 2012, but there are scarcely any guarantees, and a strong US and allied partnering and enabling effort will be critical.
- **Moreover, the ANA and outside effort needs to focus on the key elements of the order of battle and not manpower goals or doing everything at once:**
 - **6 Corps headquarters**
 - **24 Infantry brigades**

- **2 Light armor brigades**
- **2 Special operations commands**

The time for a focus on force generation is over. The time for a focus on force effectiveness is now.

Figure 26: ANSF Forces and Force Goals: ANA**ANA End-Strength (September 2011 – September 2012)**

ANA End-strength, Attrition, Recruiting, Retention, and Goal • September 2011 through September 2012													
Month/Year	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
End-strength	170,781	173,150	176,354	179,610	184,437	187,874	194,466	185,486	186,012	185,125	183,392	184,676	182,209
Attrition	-5,574	-4,134	-4,605	-4,132	-3,465	-3,351	-2,424	-3,069	-4,486	-4,597	-4,772	-3,978	-5,453
Recruiting	7,513	6,050	7,000	6,360	7,800	6,093	7,320	6,999	7,158	5,446	3,915	1,469	2,812
Retention	419	1,049	1,112	1,009	1,058	1,261	1,113	1,164	1,002	1,066	1,082	800	749
Goal	169,200	171,600	173,183	174,766	174,925	177,155	179,386	173,091	173,500	178,342	180,500	182,637	184,785

Source: Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 2011, p. 23, 35. And Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2012, p. 56.

Figure 27: Manning and Equipment of the ANA

ANA STRENGTH, QUARTERLY CHANGE						
ANA Component	Authorized			Assigned		
	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Quarterly Change	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Quarterly Change
201st Corps	18,421	18,421	None	19,613	17,966	-1,647
203rd Corps	20,614	20,614	None	21,330	20,625	-705
205th Corps	19,075	19,075	None	20,144	19,856	-288
207th Corps	14,706	14,706	None	13,824	13,261	-563
209th Corps	14,852	14,852	None	15,194	14,170	-1,024
215th Corps	17,542	17,542	None	16,942	17,135	+193
111th Capital Division	9,608	9,608	None	10,238	9,152	-1,086
Special Operations Force	12,525	12,525	None	10,193	10,338	+145
Echelons Above Corps ^a	44,712	44,712	None	36,438	36,858	+420
TTHS ^b			None	20,760	15,284	-5,476
ANA Total	172,055	172,055	None	184,676	174,645	-10,031
Afghan Air Force (AAF)	7,639	7,639	None	6,172	5,872	-300
ANA + AAF Total	179,694	179,694^c	None	190,848	180,517	-10,331

Notes: Q4 data is as of 9/6/2012. Q1 data is as of 11/21/2012.

^a Includes MoD, General Staff, and Intermediate Commands

^b Trainee, Transient, Holdee, and Student; these are not included in counts of authorized personnel

^c Includes civilians

COST OF U.S.-FUNDED ANA EQUIPMENT

Type of Equipment	Procured	Remaining to be Procured
Weapons	\$726,724,135	\$858,920
Vehicles	\$5,547,186,248	\$4,436,000
Communications Equipment	\$580,511,688	\$0
Total	\$6,854,422,071	\$5,294,920

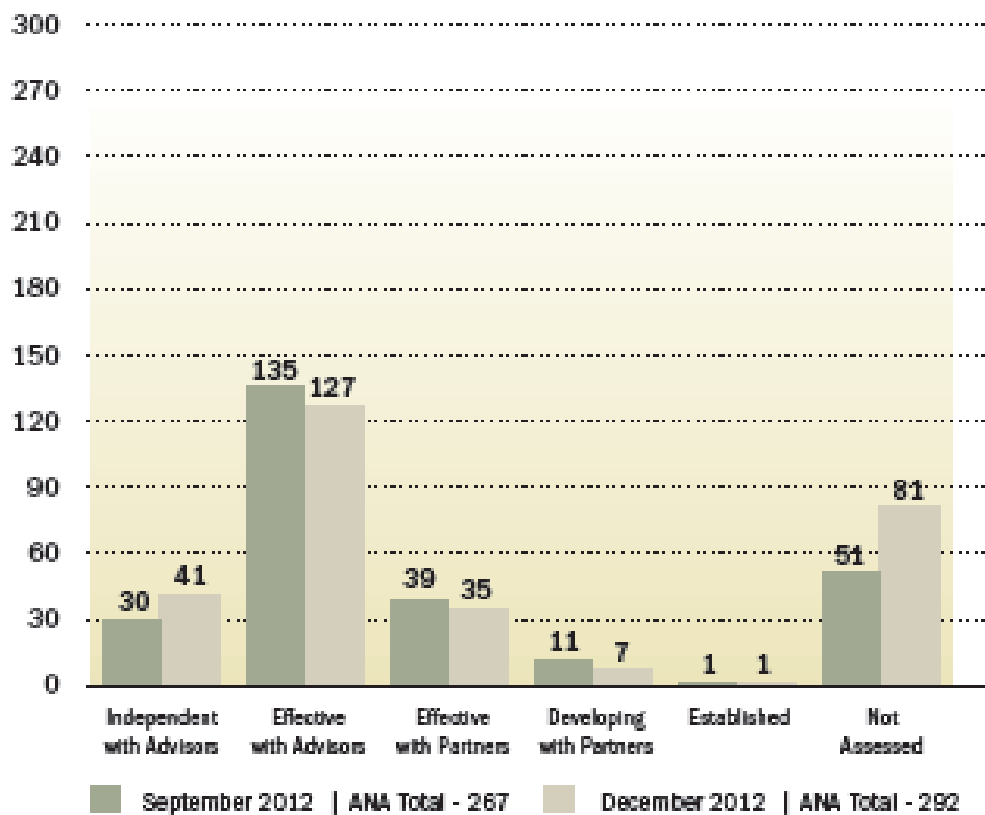
Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 73, 79, 81.

Figure 28: Progress in the MoD and General Staff

Line of Operations	Current CM*	CM1B Date	Line of Operations	Current CM	CM1B Date
AMoD Intel Policy	CM4	4Q, 13	AMOD Acquisition Tech & Logistics	CM2B	4Q, 13
AMoD Reserve Affairs	CM3	3Q, 14	Acquisition Agency	CM1B	Achieved
AMoD Dir Disaster Response	CM2B	3Q, 14	Logistics Command (LOGCOM)	CM2A	4Q, 12
MoD Chief Health Affairs	N/A	TBD	GS G4 Logistics	CM2B	3Q, 14
MoD Chf Cnstr & Prop Mgmt Div (CPMD)	CM2B	1Q, 14	Army Support Command	CM3	2Q, 13
GS G2 Intelligence	CM2B	1Q, 14	Minister of Defense	CM1B	Achieved
GS G3 Operations	CM2A	3Q, 13	1st Deputy Minister of Defense	CM2A	1Q, 13
GS G5 Policy & Planning	CM2A	1Q, 13	AMoD Strategy & Policy	CM2A	4Q, 13
GS G6 Communications	CM2B	4Q, 13	MoD Chief, Parl., Soc. & Public Affairs	CM1B	Achieved
GS G6 Comm Support Unit	CM1B	Achieved	MoD Chief of Legal Department	CM2B	4Q, 13
GS G7 Force Struc, Training & Doctrine	CM2B	3Q, 13	MoD Inspector General	CM2B	3Q, 13
GS Inspector General	CM2A	1Q, 13	Dir Strategic Communications	CM2B	1Q, 14
GS Legal Department	CM2A	2Q, 13	(CFA) Transparency & Accountability	CM3	Post 2014
ANA Special Ops Command (ASOC)	CM3	1Q, 14	Chief of the General Staff (CoGS)	CM2A	4Q, 12
Afghan Air Force Command (AAF)	N/A	Post 2014	Vice Chief of the General Staff (VCoGS)	CM2A	1Q, 13
Medical Command (MEDCOM)	CM2B	4Q, 2013	Vice Chief of General Staff-Air (VCoGS-Air)	CM3	Post 2014
AMoD Personnel	CM2A	3Q, 13	Director of GS	N/A	TBD
AMoD Education	CM3	3Q, 14	MoD Chief, Finance	CM1B	Achieved
(CFA) Gender Integration	CM4	Post 2014	AMoD S&P (Prog. & Analysis)	CM3	4Q, 13
(CFA) Civilianization	CM2B	1Q, 14	GS G8 Finance	CM2A	1Q, 13
GS G1 Personnel	CM2B	4Q, 13			
Chf, Religious & Cultural Affairs (RCA)	CM2B	4Q, 13			
ANA Training Command (ANATC)	CM2A	2Q, 13			
ANA Recruiting Command (ANAREC)	CM1B	Achieved			
Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)	CM3	3Q, 14			

Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2012, p. 51.

Figure 29: Commander's Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Rating for the ANA (January 30, 2013)



- **“Independent with Advisors:** The unit is able to plan and execute its missions, maintain command and control of subordinates, call on and coordinate quick-reaction forces and medical evacuations, exploit intelligence, and operate within a wider intelligence system.
- **Effective with Advisors:** The unit conducts effective planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status. Leaders, staff, and unit adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. Coalition forces provide only limited, occasional guidance to unit personnel and may provide “enablers” as needed. Coalition forces augment support only on occasion.
- **Effective with Partners:** The unit requires routine mentoring for planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status; coordinating and communicating with other units; and maintaining effective readiness reports. Leaders, staff, and most of the unit adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. ANSF enablers provide support to the unit; however, coalition forces may provide enablers to augment that support.
- **Developing with Partners:** The unit requires partnering and assistance for planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status; coordinating and communicating with other units; and maintaining effective readiness reports. Leaders and most of the staff usually adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. Some enablers are present and effective, providing some of the support. Coalition forces provide enablers and most of the support.
- **Established:** The unit is beginning to organize but is barely capable of planning, synchronizing, directing, or reporting operations and status, even with the presence and assistance of a partner unit. The unit is barely able to coordinate and communicate with other units. Leadership and staff may not adhere to a code of conduct or may not be loyal to the Afghan government. Most of the unit’s enablers are not present or are barely effective. Those enablers provide little or no support to the unit. Coalition forces provide most of the support.”

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 75-77.

Progress as of Late 2011

These conclusions have been supported by extensive interviews with experts in Afghanistan and who have returned from service in-country. They are also validated by the *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* of October 30, 2011. This report did contain many examples of progress but it also made it clear that there were still many limitations to the force development efforts for the ANA and AAF.⁴⁶

- Even with this progress, the growth and development of the ANSF continues to face challenges, including attrition above target levels in the ANA and some elements of the ANP, leadership deficits, and capability limitations in the areas of staff planning, management, logistics, and procurement. The ANSF continues to require enabling support, including air (both transport and close air support), logistics, ISR, and medical, from coalition resources to perform at the level necessary to produce the security effects required for Transition. The influence of criminal patronage networks on the ANSF also continues to pose a threat to stability and the Transition process. Further, the drawdown of U.S. and international forces increases the risk of a shortfall of operational partnering resources, which could reduce the ANSF-ISAF operational partnership and may impede ANSF development. (p. 4)
- Successful Transition of the lead for security responsibilities to the ANSF is heavily dependent on a healthy, sustained partnering and advising relationship. These security assistance relationships create the conditions by which ANA and ANP forces can develop and become effective in defeating the insurgency, providing security for the local population, and fostering legitimacy for the Afghan Government. These relationships provide the ANSF with the ability to operate in a complex, counterinsurgency environment while also providing operational space and timing to man, equip, and absorb critical training. As the ANSF continues to grow and the U.S. and coalition forces begin to draw down, the gap between the requirements for partnering and available resources will grow. This gap threatens to undermine force development and may pose a risk to the Transition process. As a result, IJC is currently reviewing all partnering relationships to align with projected force levels and ensure resources are used to the greatest effect in the areas where they are most needed. As of September 30, 2011, there are seven critical shortfalls for the ANA and 88 shortfalls in the ANP in focus districts (31 AUP [Afghan Uniformed Police], 22 ANCOP [Afghan National Civil Order Police], and 35 ABP [Afghan Border Police]). These shortfalls do not account for U.S. forces departing theater without backfills due to the ongoing surge recovery, and shortfalls are expected to increase as U.S. and coalition forces continue to draw down. (p. 40)
- As of September 2011, the MoD is assessed as requiring some coalition assistance to accomplish its mission (a rating of CM-2B, a status it achieved in October 2010). Overall, NTM-A [NATO Training Mission Afghanistan]/CSTC-A [Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan] anticipates the MoD moving to CM-1B by early 2013, with full Transition of most offices and functions to CM-1A by mid-2014. (p. 16)
- Although progress is being observed and assessed in a number of areas across the MoI, challenges remain that must be addressed. Civil service reform, both in personnel management and pay, is a recurring deficiency, both in the MoI and the MoD. The September 3, 2011, Ministerial Development Board recommended that Public Affairs be held in the CM-1B testing phase until civilian pay reform is achieved. The MoI Civil Service Department remains behind schedule largely because it lacks a permanent director and empowerment to effect change, as well as adequate office space, logistical support, office equipment and Internet connectivity needed to accomplish its basic functions. The Civil Service Department also requires support from the MoI

⁴⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 2011. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/October_2011_Section_1230_Report.pdf.

- senior leadership to implement the Afghan Government Public Administration Reform Law and to include conversion to the reformed pay scale. A strong partnership with provincial governors is required to improve hiring at the provincial level. The challenges surrounding civil service reform have already impeded Public Affairs' advancement and could obstruct overall MoI capacity, progress, and sustainment. (p. 18)
- Shortfalls in the institutional trainer requirements set forth in the CJSOR [Combined Joint Statement of Requirements] still exist and continue to impede the growth and development of the ANSF. CJSOR v11.0 is the current document supporting trainer requirements. As of the end of the reporting period, the shortfall in institutional trainers is 485, a decrease of 255 from the March 2011 shortfall of 740, with 1,816 deployed trainers currently in-place against the total requirement of 2,778. The United States currently sources 1,331 non-CJSOR trainer positions. In order to temporarily address the NATO CJSOR shortfall and fill the U.S.-sourced non-CJSOR requirements as quickly as possible, the United States has implemented a series of requests for information from other coalition partners, including unit-based sourcing solutions to address short-term training needs. (p. 19-20)
 - In order to maintain the accuracy of personnel figures, NTM-A/CSTC-A continues to review and revise the end-strength reporting process. During the reporting period, this constant review process highlighted a failure to report training attrition, which has resulted in a large discrepancy between actual and reported ANA end-strength numbers. After agreeing upon an accurate end strength for September, NTM-A and ANA leadership implemented new policies and procedures to ensure training base attrition is accurately reported in the future. Strong leadership within the ANA Recruiting Command (ANAREC) and effective and mature processing within National Army Volunteer Centers, which induct recruits into the ANA, has enabled adjustments to current recruiting plans in order to prevent delays in achieving the objective end-strength levels. NTMA/CSTC-A continues to work closely with and support the ANA in rectifying manning issues to ensure growth to the JCMB-endorsed ANA end-strength goal of 195,000 personnel by the end of October 2012. (p. 22)
 - Although recruiting and retention are continuing at a strong pace, if the high levels of attrition seen during this reporting period continue, there is a risk that the ANA will not be able to sustain the recruitment and training costs currently incurred to achieve the October 2012 growth goal. Historic trends show that attrition is seasonal, rising in the fall and winter and declining in the spring. The main causes of attrition in the ANA are poor leadership and accountability, separation from family, denial of leave or poor leave management, high operational tempo, and ineffective deterrence against soldiers going absent without leave (AWOL). (p. 22)... Nevertheless, President Karzai issued a decree in April 2011 renewing the policy of amnesty for AWOL officers, NCOs, and soldiers who return to their units voluntarily until March 2012. This extension has the potential to impede the ANA's ability to decrease attrition. (p. 23)
 - *[The ANA is projected to still have only 57,600 NCOs to meet a requirement of 71,900 in November 2012.]*
 - The AAF's [Afghan Air Force] long-term development strategy includes the creation of an air force that can support the needs of the ANSF and the Afghan Government by 2016. This force will be capable of Presidential airlift, air mobility, rotary and fixed-wing close air support, casualty evacuation, and aerial reconnaissance. The AAF also plans to be able to sustain its capacity through indigenous training institutions, including a complete education and training infrastructure. The air fleet will consist of a mix of Russian and Western airframes. Afghan airmen will operate in accordance with NATO procedures, and will be able to support the Afghan Government effectively by employing all of the instruments of COIN airpower. This plan, however, is ambitious, and is indicative of the tension between Afghan Government aspirations, necessity, and affordability. (p. 31-32)
 - In August 2011, the total number of reporting ANA units in the field increased to 204, and the number of units achieving an operational effectiveness rating of "Effective with Assistance" or higher was sustained at 147; alternatively, 37 units (18 percent) of fielded ANA units are in the

lowest assessment categories, “Developing” or “Established,” due to an inability to perform their mission or the immaturity of a newly fielded unit. Even the ANA’s highest-rated *kandak*, 2nd *kandak*, 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, which achieved the rating of “Independent,” remains dependent on ISAF for combat support and combat enablers. In locations without a large ISAF footprint, the ANA has exhibited little improvement and there is little reporting on their operational strengths and weaknesses. These units are typically located in the west and far northeast regions. (p. 43)

Progress as of Spring 2012

The *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan for April 2012* again reported progress, but also warned that such progress had very real limits and that serious weaknesses and challenges were likely to exist well beyond the end of 2014.⁴⁷

- The CM rating for the MoD has not changed since it achieved CM-2B in October 2010, primarily because of the addition of new departments within the overall ministry. As of the last evaluation period, of the 47 total offices and cross-functional areas, 5 of the departments had a CM-4 rating, 10 had achieved a CM-3 rating, 15 had achieved a CM-2B rating, 9 had achieved a CM-2A rating, and 4 achieved a CM-1B rating (ANA Recruiting Command, Office of the Minister of Defense, General Staff G6 Communications Support Unit, and 15 the Parliamentary, Social, and Public Affairs Department). (p. 14)
- Despite progress, the MoD faces a number of significant challenges. Although the MoD is less vulnerable to criminal penetration than the MoI, criminal patronage networks (CPNs) continue to operate within the MoD, particularly within the Afghan Air Force. Further, the MoD is challenged by a lack of human capital in many specialized areas requiring technical expertise, and the development and growth of talent and expertise will remain critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the MoD. (p. 15)
- Synchronizing the development of the MoD with the Transition to Afghan security lead throughout Afghanistan remains essential, and the MoD will need to take initiatives necessary to ensure that it is, at once, developing autonomous ministerial operations and effectively supporting the Transition process. (p. 15)
- ANSF-ISAF operations include: 1) ANA Partnered (ANA conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 2) ANP Partnered (AUP, ABP, or ANCOP conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 3) Joint ANSF Partnered (ANA and ANP conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 4) ANSF Led (ANSF conducted the mission with support from ISAF). (p. 40)
- In the past six months, the number of partnered operations as well as ANSF-led operations increased. A decrease in total number of operations in January and February 2012 is attributable to the extreme winter weather across the country. The total percentage of ANSF-led operations also increased, rising from 14 percent (16 of 112) in September 2011 to almost 33 percent (31 of 95) in February 2012. (p. 40)
- The majority of reported Level 1 and Level 2 partnered operations, as defined in figure 16, occurred in Regional Commands South (RC-S), Southwest (RC-SW), and East (RC-E) between August 2011 and January 2012; ANSF-led operations typically occurred in RC-S, RC-E, and Regional Command North (RC-N). Partnered operations are generally expected to yield an increase in ANSF-led operations as ANSF unit capabilities increase. This trend is evident in RC-S and RC-E but not in RC-SW. A more thorough analysis of Cycle 13 CUAT data for units in RC-SW shows an improvement in ANSF ability to plan and lead Level 0 operations, which are not reported through formal channels. CUAT data indicates that ANSF-led operations are most

⁴⁷ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, April 2012. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Report_Final_SecDef_04_27_12.pdf.

- frequently lower-risk operations. This conclusion is substantiated by data in Figure 15: ANSF-led Operations, which compares Level 1 and 2 operations. There was, however, one ANSF-led Level 2 operation in Khost (RC-E) in February 2012. The success of this operation illustrates the developing Afghan capacity to successfully lead operations in this sensitive border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan. (p. 40)
- The ANSF continues to face a shortage of NATO/ISAF trainers. The total number of required trainers is currently 2,774 – reflecting a slight adjustment since September 2011 when the requirement was 2778. This change is due to the elimination of 457 positions and the addition of 453 different positions. These changes are indicative of the evolution of the NTM-A mission as Afghans take responsibility for some additional tasks. The percentage of trainers in-place or pledged currently stands at 84 percent with a shortfall of 448 positions. The shortfall of absent trainers previously stood at 26 percent, but a Force Generation Conference hosted by NTM-A and SHAPE in January 2012 substantially lowered the shortfall to 16 percent. Figure 6 illustrates the current status of the CJSOR. (p. 18)
 - While progress was not uniform across all sections of the ANA, some units, such as the Afghan National Army Special Forces, have made impressive strides, and are now very capable. Progress has been slower in other areas, such as in developing the ANA logistics capabilities, or the development of the Afghan Air Force. (p. 19)
 - Using the MoD and NTM-A-agreed definition for Southern Pashtuns, this ethnic segment made up 6.6 percent of enlisted recruits during the reporting period. Despite persistent efforts, the impact of the initiatives on the security situation in the south and elsewhere remains marginal. Southern Pashtuns are defined as belonging to the following tribes: Ghilzai, Durrani, Zirk, Mohammadzai, Barakzai, Alikozai, Achakzai, Popalzai, Panjpao, Alizai, Ishaqzai, Tokhi, Hotaki, Khogiani. (p. 20)
 - Monthly attrition rates also did not meet the targeted level of 1.4 percent for the first five months of the reporting period: 2.4 percent in October, 2.6 percent in November, 2.3 percent in December, 1.9 percent in January, 1.8 percent in February, and 1.2 percent in March, for a six-month average of 2.0 percent. However, there was consistent improvement due to improvements in leadership, providing more leave to soldiers, enhanced living conditions, and pay system improvements. (p. 21)
 - The pool of potential NCOs increased with continued growth of the literacy program and recruitment focus on literate candidates. A total of 8,083 NCOs were generated between October 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, including 5,908 from the Team Leader Courses and 2,175 from initial entry 1 Uniform courses (IUC). Nevertheless, the ANA is challenged by a significant current shortfall of nearly 10,600 NCOs as well as needed growth of 6,800 additional NCOs this year. The shortage of NCOs will gradually be reduced through 2014 as experienced, qualified soldiers are identified, trained, and promoted. (p. 22)
 - ANA equipment fielding continued over the course of the reporting period. However, beginning with ANA units fielded during March 2012, there will be increasing shortages of equipment, particularly vehicles, of which nearly 4,194 are currently stranded in Pakistan due to the closure of the Pakistani ground lines of communication (GLOCs). The closure of the GLOCs has had a more limited effect on communications equipment and weapons, the delivery of which continues via air lines of communication (ALOCs). Fielding priorities for the next 180 days are expected to be met if Pakistani GLOCs are restored. Fielding new equipment to units training at the Consolidated Fielding Center will remain the focus throughout 2012. As additional equipment becomes available, NTM-A will continue to backfill corps units to 100 percent of *tashkil* authorizations. (p. 25-26)
 - At the national level, ANA logistics nodes are complete, and development efforts are expected to increasingly focus on improving logistics effectiveness in the coming year. On a regional level, the future structure of ANA logistics began to take shape in early 2012 as a merging of Forward Supply Depots and Corps Logistics Battalions into Regional Logistics Support Commands (RLSCs) started, with four mergers having been completed. Six RLSCs will report to the Army

Support Command (ASC) of the GS, building the hub for logistical support. As a sign of Afghan development, the Commander of the ASC published the implementation plan for this effort in November 2011. Notably, the nascent logistics system successfully distributed packages of cold weather clothing and equipment to ANA units during this reporting period. (p. 26)

- During the coming period, logistics development efforts will focus on facilitating distribution and using completed infrastructure in order to develop an ANA logistics system better able to respond to specific requests from the ANA units. However, despite progress, the ANA is expected to lack combat enablers and logistics support for the foreseeable future. (p. 26)
- AAF plans, however, are ambitious and indicative of a need to balance Afghan Government aspirations, necessity, and affordability. As of the current reporting period, AAF capacity and capability remained extremely limited and future progress is challenged by significant obstacles, including inadequate national education and literacy levels as well as a nascent pilot training program. (p. 26)
- Corruption also remains a significant problem in the AAF, where a criminal patronage network is involved in numerous illegal activities. ISAF and the Afghan Government continue to work together to combat corruption, and as of the end of the reporting period, numerous investigations were ongoing. Nevertheless, the Afghan Government has yet to demonstrate the political will to address corruption and remove and prosecute corrupt officials on a consistent basis. (p. 26)
- All lines of operation made limited progress during the reporting period, but remain immature. The AAF build timeline lags the rest of the ANSF, as it started its training mission two years later, and more time is needed for technical training to produce pilots, mechanics, and several other technical skill sets. (p. 27)
- The AAF airmen build remains underdeveloped. The overall strength of the AAF was 5,541 at the end of the reporting period, with 1,577 currently in training. The pilot training program currently has 55 candidates progressing through the self-paced (normally 18 months) English language training course and 64 progressing through 12-month pilot training courses. New accession pilot candidates are required to possess an 80 English Competency Level score before beginning a formal pilot training course. Future training can now be conducted entirely within Afghanistan with the opening of the training center in Shindand, but the March course was cancelled due to a lack of progression by pilot candidates in the English language course. Shindand is capable of producing 70 pilots per year. There are also Afghan pilots attending courses in the United States, United Arab Emirates, and the Czech Republic. (p. 27)
- In November 2011, NTM-A and the AAF conducted a data call to assess the training level of AAF airmen, evaluating 2,800 personnel, or more than half of the force. The assessment revealed that 1,918 of those surveyed were undertrained but remained assigned to units. Combining the data call and subsequent investigations, only 973 personnel were found to be fully trained for their position. NTM-A and the AAF responded with additional training programs, resulting in 557 additional personnel that have now completed training. The existing shortfall in trained airmen is significant; the lack of a sufficient aircrew impedes the growth of the capability and infrastructure for the AAF and undermines the ability to grow the force. (p. 27)
- As of March 2012, the AAF was rated as CM-4 (exists but cannot accomplish its mission) because not all manpower billets are sourced, and those that are filled often lack appropriate training. Kabul Air Wing is still awaiting its programmed allocation of aircraft. Currently, Kabul aircraft include 15 C-27s, 18 Mi-17s (with expected arrival of six additional aircraft in Spring 2012), and 11 Mi-35s, of which four have expired. As part of this fleet, Kabul also hosts the Presidential airlift, with three Mi-17s and two C-27A aircraft dedicated to this important mission. (p. 27)
- Kandahar Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, due to the absence of all programmed mission aircraft (C-27, LAS, C-208). Additionally, the wing lacks manpower and training, which will follow once it begins to receive additional mission aircraft. Kandahar currently has seven of the planned 11 Mi-17s. Activities are underway now to permanently base four C-27As as the final five C-27As are delivered later this spring. Kandahar will also be receiving the C-208 light lift aircraft as

deliveries continue through summer 2013. (p. 28)

- Although Shindand Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, it has continued to mature as the AAF's training wing. During the reporting period, Shindand has begun initial pilot training with the newly delivered C-182 trainer aircraft. The AAF's English Language Training immersion program, "Thunder Lab," will move to Shindand during the spring of 2012. (p. 28)
- Cycle 13 CUAT data showed the number of partnered units within the ANA increased from 175 in August 2011 to 201 in February 2012. The number of units reported as uncovered/unassessed or not reported was 37. The total number of ANA *kandaks* was also increased to show the number of units lacking any assessment data. (p. 38)

The July 30, 2012, SIGAR Quarterly Report described similar progress and challenges facing the ANA and MoD in the years to come:⁴⁸

- ...the number of reporting ANA units in the field fell from 251 to 204, according to the ISAF Joint Command (IJC). (p. 70)
- As a sign of progress, notwithstanding the decrease of reporting units, the number of units rated "independent with advisors" increased for the 201st Corps (2 more), 205th Corps (2 more), 207th Corps (1 more), and the Headquarters Security and Support Brigade (1 more). (p. 70)
- ...the number of units in the highest rating categories increased in the aggregate—65 were rated "independent with advisors" (compared with 41 in April 2012) and 168 were rated "effective with advisors" (compared with 174). (p. 70)
- At the MoD, 42 of 47 staff sections and cross-functional areas were assessed this quarter. Of those, 26% were rated CM-2A (the same percentage as last quarter), and 36% were rated CM-2B (a 1% decrease from last quarter), as shown in Figure 3.24 on the following page. Nine staff sections and cross-functional areas improved (three achieved a CM-1B rating—the second highest rating—bringing the number rated CM-1B to six), and 31 were stable. (p. 71)
- As of May 20, 2012, the ANA's strength was 191,592—including 5,580 in the Afghan Air Force (AAF)—according to CSTC-A. As reported, the ANA consists of 29,277 officers, 51,983 noncommissioned officers, and 110,332 enlisted personnel. However, SIGAR noticed anomalies in the data reported this quarter. In addition, CSTC-A noted that civilians were counted as part of overall force strength. (p. 73)
- This quarter, CSTC-A said it is in the early stages of deploying a computerized pay system for the ANA that would track personnel, base pay, and incentive pay, but noted that the system is months away from being fully capable. Once the system is completed, NTM-A will be able to perform detailed pay audits to better ensure that ANA personnel are paid accurately. (p. 73)
- Low literacy rates among ANSF personnel remain a challenge. Since 2010, the United States has funded three contracts each with a limit of five years of service—one-year options may be exercised in August of each year—and a maximum cost of \$200 million. As of this quarter, according to CSTC-A, three contractors were providing 1,496 literacy trainers to the ANA. (p. 76)
- Determining the ANA's current level of literacy has been difficult. According to CSTC-A, the literacy rate of the ANSF as a whole is 11%. However, at the Kabul Military Training Center, approximately 13% of recruits pass initial literacy tests before their training begins, which could suggest a higher literacy rate among those personnel who have completed literacy training courses. (p. 76)

⁴⁸ SIGAR *Quarterly Report*, July 30, 2012. <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2012-07-30qr.pdf>.

Progress as of Winter 2012

The January 30, 2013, SIGAR Quarterly Report provided new readiness assessments for the ANA and further highlighted some of the key challenges ANA and MoD still faced in the years to come:

- Out of the 292 reported ANA units, 168 (58%) were rated at the two highest levels: 14% were “independent with advisors” and 43% were “effective with advisors.” Out of 536 reported ANP units, 172 (32%) were rated at those levels: 13% were “independent with advisors” and 19% were “effective with advisors.” (p. 77)
- In a January 2013 audit report of U.S.-funded fuel for the ANA, SIGAR found that CSTC-A lacked sufficient accountability to order, accept deliveries of, and pay for various types of fuel. In addition, estimates of the ANA’s future fuel needs (which would require approximately \$3.1 billion in U.S. appropriations over the next six fiscal years) were not supported by validated fuel requirements or actual consumption data and may be overstated. The audit called for tighter controls over petroleum, oil, and lubricants for the ANA’s vehicles, generators, and power plants. (p. 80)
- The ANA’s literacy program is based on a 312-hour curriculum. According to CSTC-A, in order to progress from illiteracy to functional literacy, a student may take as many as seven tests. The student’s performance determines if he or she progresses to the next training level. As of December 1, 2012, the ANA success rates for the passing these tests were: 95% for Level 1 literacy, 97% for Level 2, and 97% for Level 3. (p. 82)
- As of November 20, 2012, ANA personnel included 380 women—268 officers, 105 NCOs, and seven enlisted personnel—according to CSTC-A. This is about the same number as last quarter. CSTC-A noted that these numbers include 34 Afghan Air Force personnel. The current target is for women to make up 10% of the 195,000-strong combined ANA and Afghan Air Force. Recruitment of women remains a low priority for the ANA, according to CSTC-A. The ANA lacks a centralized and structured process to screen, test, and process women applicants. However, the ANA has recognized the need for women in fields such as intelligence and law, and has been supportive of hiring women to fill such positions. (p. 83)

The 1230 Report for December 2012 provided the further update on ANA force building shown in **Figure 26**, and new data on progress in building up the combat corps that are the key elements of the ANA – along with SOF – and in equipping the ANA that are shown in **Figure 27**.

At the same time, the report provided the warnings about the readiness of the MoD reflected in **Figure 28** and cautioned that,⁴⁹

The MoD and GS have made impressive progress in their ability to plan operations, which is an exceptionally difficult task even in Western defense ministries. However, the ability of these ministries to actually implement operational plans is still developing. The MoD, like many Afghan government institutions, lacks sufficient trained, educated, and professional staff in order to plan and execute operations at a requisite pace.

The MoD is capable of deploying forces, but is deficient in its ability to ensure that those fielded forces are physically issued with equipment that has been provided by NTM-A. In many cases the equipment is in depots and not in the hands of the soldiers who require it. The ability to collect, share, and act on intelligence at the ministerial level is being developed; an assessment of this ability is not possible at this time, however. As a general rule, the various departments within MoD and the GS function well internally (although some departments, such as Counter-IED

⁴⁹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 48-64.

operations, continue to face challenges); however, their interaction and coordination with other departments requires improvement. Reflective of a problem common to many ministries of defense, internal stovepiping of information and a lack of staff interaction between departments hampers the maturing of the MoD and GS.

Due to the high pace of ANA expansion, the MoD and GS often do not have sufficient time to examine issues and develop coordinated, cross-functional solutions. Structurally, the Afghan military is not a mirror image of Coalition militaries, and the Afghans are, with ISAF support, developing their own strategies, policies, and procedures to address these issues. Afghan solutions to these issues will not replicate NATO or other Coalition's procedures, and western standards should not [be] used as benchmarks to gauge Afghan progress.

The total NTM-A (CJSOR 12.0) number of required trainers is 2,612...Although the requirement for ANP instructors by the end of the reporting period is 1,504, the ANP had only 1,126 personnel assigned to instructor positions. The ANP has consistently trained more instructors than required; however, it has been unable to assign enough of them to schools, resulting in a shortfall.

Although attrition levels exceeded the monthly goal of 1.4 percent each month during the reporting period, strong recruiting and retention efforts, which both exceeded their goals every month, contributed to the solid overall end-strength figures.

The main causes of attrition and low retention are poor leadership and accountability, separation from family, denial of leave or poor leave management, high operational tempo, and ineffective deterrence against soldiers going absent without leave (AWOL). The Attrition Working Group, made up of ANA, NTM-A, and IJC officials, continues to monitor and assess these trends in order to determine causes and potential solutions to reduce the overall attrition rate. Should the attrition rates consistently fail to meet target levels, there is a risk that training costs will compromise the Afghan government's ability to maintain the 195,000 force. Consistently high attrition may also negatively affect ANSF capabilities, as a high number of soldiers will have to be recruited and trained each year, resulting in a force composed of many inexperienced soldiers.

The MoD continued to improve and increase leadership development by focusing on increasing both the quality and capacity of officer and NCO training programs. During the reporting period 29,180 trainees graduated from Basic Warrior Training (BWT), 423 soldiers from Officer Candidates' School (OCS), and 3,765 from 1 Uniform Course (1U – an NCO direct accessions course). BWT and 1U courses have been operating at or above capacity throughout the entire reporting period.

Nevertheless, growing the required number of NCOs for the ANA remains challenging. The SY 1391 Tashkil authorizes the ANA 64,132 NCO positions. In order to address current NCO shortfall, an additional 7,093 are required. The plan to address the NCO shortfall emphasizes developing an experienced NCO corps by promoting from within the ranks. The shortage of NCOs will gradually be reduced through 2014, as experienced, qualified soldiers are identified, trained, and promoted.

CSTC-A procured and delivered a high percentage of ANA-required equipment to Afghan depots during the reporting period. Of the three main categories of equipment required by the ANA (shoot, move, and communicate), [sic] CSTC-A delivered 102 percent of "shoot" equipment, 89 percent of "move" equipment, and 93 percent of "communicate" equipment. The re-opening of the Pakistan GLOC on July 4 enabled increased delivery of equipment to Afghanistan. However, delivering equipment to the national and regional depots does not mean that this equipment has reached personnel in the field. The ANA's main challenge in equipping its units continues to be the delivery of equipment from depots to the units deployed in the field.

Each individual ANA unit is slated to receive equipment that has been released from the national depots, shipped through the ANA Central Movement Agency, and delivered to ANA Regional Logistic Support Commands (RLSC). RLSCs subsequently issue the equipment to the field units. Ensuring that the requisitioned equipment makes it through this chain to the units in the field has been challenging, however. Some RLSCs have warehoused equipment waiting to be issued, while nearby units in the field are forced to operate in an under-equipped state. CSTC-A has limited

ability to track equipment once it is delivered to the depots, although the equipment levels of partnered units in the field are tracked under the Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) system.

Despite this focus, NTM-A anticipates that the ANA will continue to require assistance with logistics and acquisition processes beyond December 2014. The ANA logistics enterprise is in the early stages of development, and capabilities are widely variable, with some hubs functioning at a high level and others struggling to establish a basic level of self-sufficiency. Overall, the various Afghan logistical processes and organizations, regardless of proficiency level, do not operate as one national logistics system in an integrated and cohesive manner.

However, many challenges remain. Although capabilities are demonstrated in some areas (local contracting for food, spare parts, and services), additional focus and attention is needed at a national/strategic level for requirements planning, budget integration, supply planning, quality assurance, contracting, distribution, material accountability, and performance measurements. In some process areas, a minimum core capability set does not yet exist, and in other more advanced processes such as contracting, a viable basic capability has been demonstrated since 2011. The lack of trained logistics staff officers throughout the ANSF is a concern, however, and is likely to become increasingly problematic as ISAF reduces its advisor and mentoring positions. The low numbers of qualified logisticians at both soldier and leader levels continue to be a concern. NTM-A has addressed this challenge through application of Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) focused on maintenance, supply, distribution, and mid-level logistics management. In addition to formal, classroom-based training, ANSF logisticians are being trained through On-the-Job Training (OJT). NTM-A anticipates that the number of school-trained logisticians will increase by more than 10 percent (from 9,900 to 11,000) over the next few months, and that training executed by MTTs will produce an additional 2,500 trained logisticians.

Currently, the ANSF is dependent on CSTC-A for all bulk fuel ordering, delivery, and acquisition. The lack of technical capacity to solicit and manage contracts for logistics contributes to this problem. However, CSTC-A intends to conduct a phased transfer of all fuel funding and acquisition responsibilities for the ANA and ANP to the MoD and MoI. By January 2013, MoD will gradually begin taking over management of bulk fuel acquisition and distribution. Transition of these responsibilities will be completed by December 2014. The plan will be developed jointly with the MoD and MoI through an executive-level Fuel Committee and a Fuel Working Group. The executive Fuel Committee will also involve the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Ministry of Finance.

Real Progress Not Reflect in the CM and CUAT Ratings

It should be stressed that the ANA is making real progress up to the corps level, is capable of steadily larger and more capable operations in the field, and is able to adapt to a balanced cut in outside support. The 1230 Report issued in December 2012 does indicate that there still are no ANA units that are effective without advisors, and only 27 out of 267 rated units (10%) are “independent with advisors” – a category that has no clear definition.⁵⁰

The report shows that there are 295 units in the fielded ANA force. A total of 209 have advisors or partners rating the units’ effectiveness. A total of 58 are autonomous or not

⁵⁰ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 84, 93.

assessed and 28 more are not covered. This is a total of 70% of 295 ANA units. It then states – drawing heavily on the work of Franz Kafka – that,⁵¹

OCCs had an increase in top-third units with 22 (71 percent) of the 31 reported/required having achieved this milestone. This is an increase of four (18 percent) from the 18 reported as top-third units in the previous cycle, which shows improvement over a three-month period. Of those 18, (11 percent) were not reported this cycle.

In summary, out of the 267 ANA and OCC required units, 165 (62 percent) are top-third units. This is a six percent increase from the 157 units reported in the top two RDLs in Cycle 14 while 16 (10 percent) of the 157 top-third units from that cycle were not reported in Cycle 15.

Yet, for all the reasons noted earlier, the CUAT reporting on the ability of ANA units to stand on their own is questionable. Moreover, the December 2012 report indicates the CUAT combat effectiveness rating system is being revised to cover operational performance for the first time and needs to be further revised to establish separate rating systems for the ANA and ANP at some unspecified point in the future. (It also reports that future effectiveness reporting will go from having ISAF trainer/advisors rate about 60% of Afghan performance to having Afghans rate their own performance – a shift of which the negative consequences are too predictable to require further analysis.)⁵²

Yet, DoD did provide other metrics that are more useful. Its December 2012 report now focuses on the level of contingency operations – which is a security and war-fighting metric rather than a force-generation metric. It also now reports the actual level of ISAF-versus ANSF-led operations – although it makes no attempt to tie them to its scoring system for the difficulty of the operation, or provide information regarding which element of the ANSF was involved at what level of force, the level of risk, the location of the operation, or its impact on security.

These data are shown in **Figure 30**. They show that the ANSF is making progress toward independence, and they at least make a start towards some form of meaningful measurement of ANSF capability. In any case, the DoD reports that the present rating systems will be replaced by an Afghan system, and almost regardless of what the US and ISAF want, such a system will become dominated by Afghan standards, values, and accuracy of reporting.⁵³

Reporting on the size of the SOF is somewhat contradictory, but they seem to have at least 14,000 men through the 2013 campaign season and will have at least 12,000 after that time. They are organized into nine commandos of some 900 men each, and there are also 19 Provincial Response Companies with plans to create up to 15 more.

⁵¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 87, 92.

⁵² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 85, 91.

⁵³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 91-92.

Figure 30: Levels of Contingency Operation and Trend in Partnered Operations**Levels of Risk**

Level R (Routine)	Routine operations that do not involve entries into compounds (i.e., operations other than level 0, 1, or 2). Not expected to have political consequences.
Level 0 (Low Risk)	Day-time deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive 'soft-knock' and 'hard-knock'). Political consequences offer minimum potential of prejudicial IO, media, or political impact.
Level 1 (Medium Risk)	Operations involving entry into houses or compounds at night to include deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive 'soft-knock' and 'hard-knock'). May have minor to moderate unfavorable regional media impact, detrimental IO and/or undesirable political consequences, manageable at the regional level.
Level 2 (High Risk)	Pre-planned kinetic operations within 10km of border with Pakistan or Iran. SOF conducting deliberate operations with company size force or greater within 1km of border with Pakistan, or 10km of border with Iran. Arrest, apprehension, or detainment of any current or prominent former Afghan Government appointed official. Potential for collateral damage, unfavorable media impact, severely detrimental IO, and/or undesirable political consequences.

Conventional Partnered Operations

Operational Category	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
ISAF Unilateral	601	734	525	748
ISAF Led - Partnered	1,359	1,033	790	428
ANSF Led - Partnered	240	278	287	194
ANSF Led - Advised	125	161	113	139
ANSF Unilateral	5,322	7,136	5,994	6,225
Total ISAF-Led OPS	1,960	1,767	1,315	1,176
Total ANSF Led OPS	5,687	7,575	6,394	6,558
Total OPS	7,647	9,342	7,709	7,734
% of Total OPS That are ISAF Led	26%	19%	17%	15%
% of Total OPS That Are ANSF Led	74%	81%	83%	85%

Special Forces Partnered Operations

ISAF SOF & ANSF SOF	April-12	May-12	June-12	July-12	August-12	September-12
ANSF-Led Partnered SOF Ops	173	199	250	301	195	250
ISAF-led Partnered SOF Ops	123	139	73	73	90	60
ISAF SOF Advised Ops / ANSF in lead	30	69	40	36	46	52
Total Partnered or Advised SOF Ops	326	407	363	410	331	362
ANSF SOF Unilateral Ops	18	10	21	20	64	52
ISAF SOF Unilateral Ops	6	11	4	13	40	20
Total Unilateral SOF Ops	24	21	25	33	104	72
Total SOF Ops	350	428	388	443	435	434
% of Total SOF Ops that are Partnered	93%	95%	94%	93%	76%	83%
% of Partnered SOF Ops that are ANSF-Led	62%	66%	80%	82%	73%	83%

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 90-91.

The AAF Continues to Lag and Will Not Be Fly Ready For Transition Before 2017

The AAF presents special problems in a mix of forces that are just beginning to acquire real artillery fire support, need airpower to provide rapid combat support and mobility, and will require medevac capability. The DoD 1230 Report for December 2012 continued to raise serious questions about the AAF, and showed why it was not scheduled for full Transition before 2017.⁵⁴

The Afghan Air Force's (AAF) long-term development strategy includes the creation of an air force that can support the basic needs of the ANSF and Afghan government by 2017...AAF plans, however, are ambitious, and indicative of the conflict of aspirations, affordability, and necessity within the Afghan government. At present, AAF capacity and capability remains limited, but with a clear path to meet the demand of both the AAF and SMW pilot requirements. AAF development obstacles include inadequate education and literacy levels. The pilot training program is a two-year program, inclusive of English language training.

Corruption and infiltration by criminal patronage networks (CPN) also remain significant problems in the AAF. ISAF and the Afghan government continue to work together to combat corruption in the AAF, and as of the end of the reporting period, numerous investigations into allegations of corruption and other illegal activities were ongoing. As in other areas of governance, however, the Afghan government has yet to demonstrate the political will to address corruption and remove and prosecute corrupt officials on a consistent basis.

AAF airmen generation made progress during the reporting period but remains underdeveloped. The overall strength of the AAF was 6,224 personnel at the end of the reporting period, with 795 personnel currently in training. The pilot training program currently has 72 candidates progressing through the self-paced, roughly 18-month English-language training course, and 144 progressing through various 12-month pilot training courses.

The AAF training program has expanded and begun training pilots from Shindand AB; it is envisioned that in the future, all pilot training will be conducted entirely within Afghanistan. Following a series of investigations early this year that found substantial training deficits, NTMA and the AAF responded with additional training programs in an effort to achieve a fully trained force.

At the close of this reporting period, fewer than 1,000 airmen on duty remained untrained. NTM-A will ensure institutional and mobile training continues until all airmen receive the necessary training. In addition, throughout the reporting period, NTM-A and AAF Training and Personnel Officers were able to better define Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) and to refine the 2015-manning plan for the AAF based on the 2015 aircraft operational laydown.

On the operational side, the AAF received three additional Mi-17s in June. The final 12 Mi-17s are expected to be delivered between August and October of 2013. During this period the AAF underwent a complete maintenance overhaul to their Mi-17 and Mi-35 fleets. Maintenance standards were not being met or documented, and required a ground-up regeneration effort.

Of the 16 Mi-17 helicopters that required a special 300-hour inspection, all but five have been completed and returned to service. Additionally, three Mi-17s were retired, four scheduled for overhaul, and two slated to be sent for a Return-to-Service inspection. The Coalition has provided experienced technicians to run the Mi-35 inspection line. To date, 2 Mi-35s are undergoing the inspection with four more awaiting entrance. Expected completion date for the Mi-35 is November 2012. The current work being done on the Mi-35s is not intended to extend the service life of the Mi-35s but will return them to service.

⁵⁴ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 64-66.

The AAF's medium airlift capability will be met through the procurement of 20 G222 aircraft. The AAF has accepted delivery of 16 aircraft to date. The G222 program stood down in December 2011 to address maintenance and safety of flight issues. Efforts to improve the daily operational availability of these aircraft have been initiated.

The AAF's light-lift mission capability is expanding rapidly. In addition to the six Cessna 208 aircraft now in place for fixed wing pilot training, eight more Cessna 208s are now in country to begin operational airlift missions. NTM-A is currently working to accelerate the delivery of the final 12 C-208s by the end of 2012 (the planned deliveries were originally anticipated to be complete by summer 2013). This will complete the operational C-208 Light Lift fleet at 20 operational aircraft. Limited air-to-ground attack capabilities are being delivered by seven of the 11 Mi-35 helicopters.

The operational life of the remaining four has now expired. In response the AAF may convert several Mi-17s into attack helicopters. This air-to-ground capability will transition in the future to the much more capable and modern Light Air Support (LAS) aircraft. Currently the LAS program is progressing through the acquisition procurement process. Contract award is anticipated to occur by January 2013, with the first aircraft deliveries occurring in the third quarter of 2014. The LAS aircraft will provide a highly capable western air-interdiction platform.

As of September 2012, the AAF was rated as CM-4 (exists but cannot accomplish its mission) because not all manpower billets are sourced, and the airmen filling current billets often lack appropriate training. Kabul Air Wing is still awaiting its programmed allocation of aircraft.

Currently, Kabul aircraft include 16 G222, 17 Mi-17s, and seven Mi-35s. As part of this fleet, Kabul Air Wing also hosts the Presidential airlift, which will consist of three Mi-17s and two G222 dedicated aircraft.

Kandahar Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, due to the absence of all programmed mission aircraft (Mi-17s, G222s, LAS, and C-208s). Additionally, the wing lacks manpower and training, which will follow once it begins to receive additional mission aircraft. Kandahar currently has five of the planned 13 Mi-17s. NTM-A continues to evaluate whether to locate four G222s in Kandahar should the final four G222s be delivered to Afghanistan. Kandahar will also receive the C-208 light lift aircraft as deliveries continue through December 2012.

Although Shindand Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, it has continued to mature as the AAF's training wing. During the reporting period, Shindand began initial pilot training with newly delivered C-182, C-208, and MD-530 training aircraft. Additionally, the AAF's English Language Training immersion program, "Thunder Lab," was moved to Shindand Air Base.

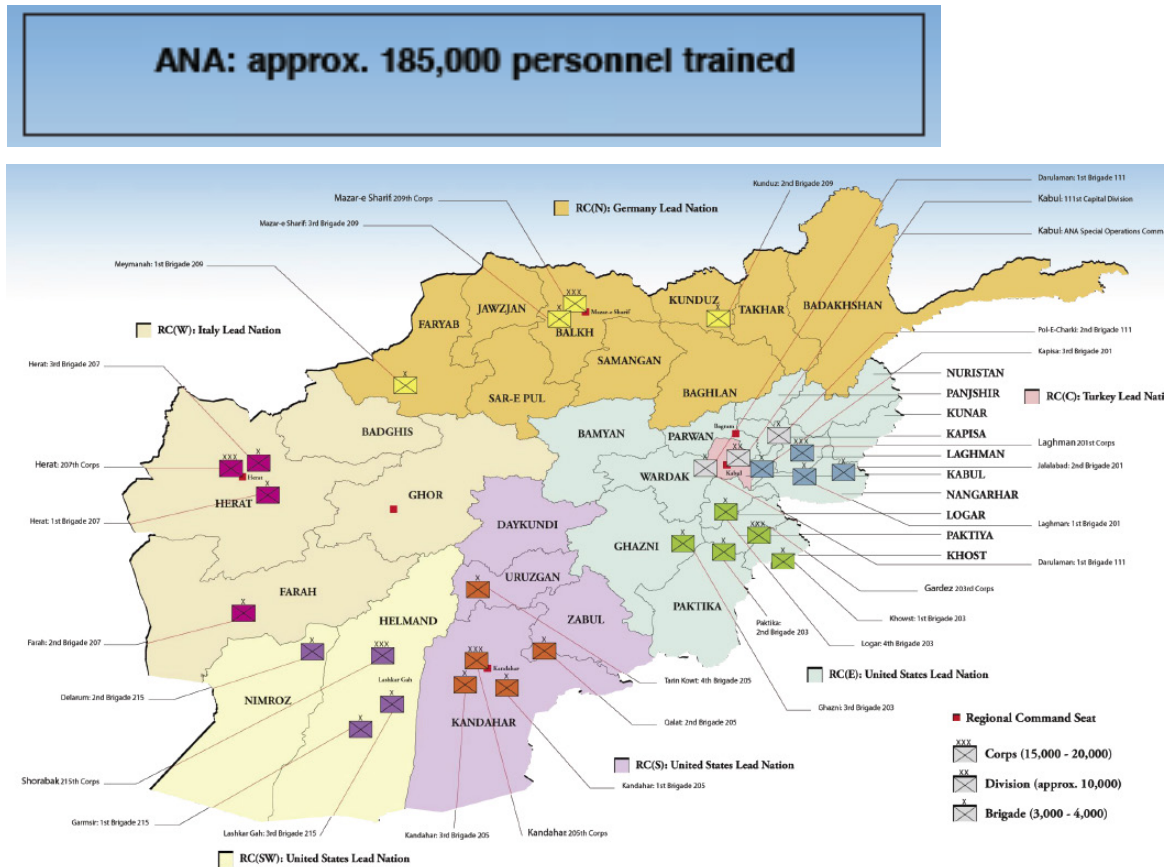
Allocating ANA and Other Key Combat Forces

Much will depend on whether the ANA and other combat-capable forces will be allocated and deployed to meet the threats to and the most critical needs of the Afghan people, and not react according to power broker interference and pressure. **Figure 31** shows the deployment and unit strength of ANA forces, and provides a broad perspective on the relative strength of the ANSF in key areas. It is also clear, however, that some of these ANA forces are not deployed in high-risk or high-combat areas and can cover only part of the country. It is a warning that Transition may sharply affect combat and overall security performance as ISAF forces withdraw regardless of the current readiness ratings of the ANSF.

Figure 31 does not include the Afghan police but – with some exceptions like the ANCOF and the best elements of the ALP – it is a far more realistic picture of actual ANSF capability than a total or figure showing *all* Afghan forces. This is because such a metric would include a largely corrupt and incapable police force that has far more limits than the ANA. The real-world force levels of the ANSF are likely to remain far closer to

200,000 men – who will remain partially dependent on US enablers well after 2014 – than the 352,000-man goal that includes most elements of the ANP.

Figure 31: Afghan Army Forces in 2012



Source: "International Security Assistance Force (ISAF): Key Facts and Figures," December 3, 2012.
<http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat.pdf>.

Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay

There is no way in which to predict whether the ANA will maintain its current momentum towards becoming an effective force or will decay as US and other ISAF forces leave. Much depends on the outcome of the 2014 election: whether enough Afghans perceive it as legitimate, whether an effective leader emerges, whether it brings enough national unity to win and sustain popular support, whether the new government proves to be able to govern effectively, and whether, the MoD, ANA, and AAF receive effective support in the field. Failed leadership is likely to produce a splintered ANA divided along ethnic and geographic lines, a coup (which could cost the ANA outside support), or result in the kind of high-level political interference and emphasis on Presidential control that can cripple the force.

The same uncertainties surround adequate funding of the ANA, sustained support in the form of outside aid, and US and allied willingness to provide trainers, partners, and enablers. The US has not yet shown it will provide the needed outside support even if President Karzai can limit the level of tension he creates with the US before the 2014 election, the election is a real election and is held, and an effective new government follows. It is clear that the ANA will not be able to become an effective force without such US support well beyond 2014, and other allied ISAF states will not make a major of sustained contribution without clear and unambiguous US leadership and commitment.

At the same time, the ANA and AAF are even more vulnerable to the internal pressures that undercut the South Vietnamese and Iraqi military forces for the simple reason the ANSF have so few sources of internal funding and are pushing their force development more quickly. They are vulnerable to ethnic and sectarian divisions, to power broker influence – particularly if the election or leadership that follows fails. The structures above the Kandak level and support the combat arms are weak and may weaken further when they come under pressure after 2014.

As the Iraqi Army showed within months of losing US advisors in the field, it is all too easy to start selling positions, promotion, and retention. Higher level corruption remains a serious problem and could grow much worse if the 2014 election fails to produce effective leadership, if ANA officers start seeking profits to protect themselves from the collapses of the force, or various power brokers start bidding for ANA support for money, power, or along ethnic lines.

A few major defeats can catalyze the collapse of an immature force. A shortage of enablers can severely weaken the force either because the ANA does not get enough post-2014 outside support, or its intelligence, fire support, logistic, O&M, medical, transportation, training base, and other key enabling elements fail to mature as expected.

The US cannot provide a substitute for effective Afghan elections, leadership, and governance. It can, however, accept the need to provide the proper mix of trainers, partners, and enablers – and funding – for a force that is actually far from ready for Transition at the end of 2014. It can act on the reality that no amount of spin or real progress before the end of 2014 can produce an effective ANA and AAF, and that success depends on maintaining high levels of support to guard against failure rather than the cheapest or most “cost-effective” option available.

Accepting the Real-World Capability of the Police Forces

It is almost as dangerous to lump all of the elements of the Afghan police together as it is to indulge in the absurdity of focusing on 352,000 men as a measure of progress when it includes so many different force elements and excludes critical elements like the ALP. Each element of the police forces has a radically different mix of capabilities; and level of political interference, corruption, and ties to power brokers and criminal networks.

Each element has very good units within it, but the larger elements all have many mediocre and some bad and corrupt units as well. The fact that current rating systems ignore these realities out of political considerations (and sometimes a basic lack of professional competence) does not make them any less real.

Dealing with Key Force-Building Challenges

The ANP is a very mixed force – subject to politics, power brokers, and corruption to a far greater extent than the ANA. The AUP and Afghan Border Police (ABP) are critically dependent on effective governance and the other elements of the rule of law – capabilities lacking or critically weak and corrupt in at least half the districts in the country. While recent reports do reflect real progress, such progress needs to be kept in far more careful perspective than is the case for the ANA, particularly because the current rating systems – while politically correct – are fundamentally dishonest and incompetent because they do not assess either the level of support from governance and the other elements of the rule of law, or the level of political interference, corruption, and ties to power brokers and criminal networks.

The scale of the problems involved are summarized in **Figure 32 to Figure 35**:

- **Figure 32 shows the pace of the buildup in manpower and the level of problems in attrition and turnover that still need to be addressed.** The problems involved are more serious than with the ANA, but like the ANA, it should be stressed that the goal is not to meet the total in manpower, but to create a stable manpower base with the proper training, and steadily more experienced officers and manpower. Like all other aspects of the sometimes-mindless race to 352,000, quantity per se rarely tells in the combat performance of an inexperienced and half-formed force. Quality always does.
- **Figure 33 highlights the progress in manning by corps and equipment.** It is critical to understand that most of the ANP will succeed or fail at the local and district levels and on the basis of the interaction between units at the District level with local governance; the other elements of the rule of law; and the relative power of insurgents, criminals, power brokers, militias, and the ALP:

Partnering with the ANP will be far harder after the 2014 election and as US and other ISAF forces and advisors withdraw, and partnering at the MoIA and provincial levels can only have a limited impact after 2014. Nevertheless, the ANP will need outside advisors and partners through 2016 to 2018. In practice, trying to do this from Kabul, rather than from at least several facilities in the “four corners” of the country, will again be a recipe for exceptional risk. It will take whatever presence Afghan politics – and US/allied funding and political will – makes practical to build understanding, personal relationships, and credibility. This will be particularly true in trying to deal with serious problems at the district Police Chief level and in governance and the rest of the elements of a prompt justice system.

As for equipment, the costs shown in **Figure 32** are scarcely a measure of progress, and the ANA is almost certain to have several years to half a decade in which it will need logistics push and equipment resupply and replacement to make up for its problems in logistics and maintenance. The ANA does need “tough love” to push it into self-reliance, but “tough love” does not consist of letting it walk off a cliff as a learning experience. It is also clear that the present equipment mix and TO&Es will not survive engagement with reality, will evolve to absorb the equipment the US and its allies leave behind, and must adapt to suit Afghan experience versus US and ISAF theory.

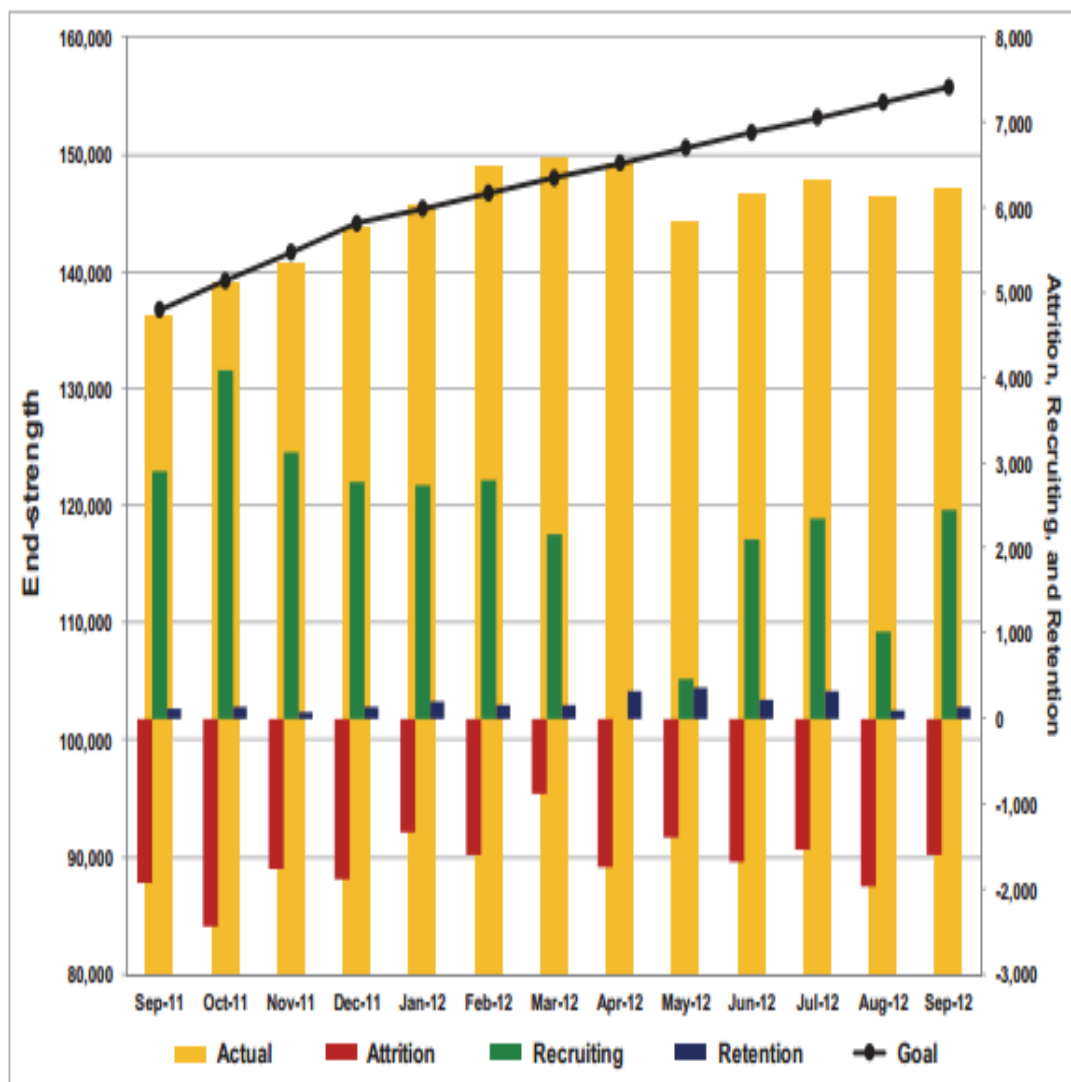
Figure 34 reinforces the warning given earlier about the MoD and MoIA: These remain major challenges in force building and will continue to pose challenges through at least 2016-2018. The MoIA is as important to ANP development as the MoD is to ANA development. **Figure 34** shows that the MoIA has considerably more internal problems in moving towards a successful Transition. Once again, even if one could ignore the reality that Afghan politics tend to be a blood sport, the uncertain leadership that may emerge after 2014, the risk of some eventual move towards a coup, corruption and the impact of political power brokers, and ethnic/sectarian/tribal divisions – there would still be a major lack of experience and professional competence and a need to create and adapt planning and management systems through the MoD.

- **Figure 35 shows the relative level of progress in force building using force generation metrics that again are an increasingly poor measures of future combat capability.** The CUAT and CM force rating systems shown in **Figure 34** are not without value, but they are largely measures of whether a force has been generated with all of the previous measures and can meet some kind of limited test for independent combat operations. Historically, they are very limited measures of how well a force does in combat over time and particularly given the caveats about the local character of most police operations; and the importance of politics, power brokers, tribal/ethnic/sectarian factions, corruption, ties to criminal networks, and accommodation with insurgents or local militia and armed forces.
- **Moreover, the ANP and outside assistance efforts need to focus on the key elements of the order of battle and not manpower goals or doing everything at once:**
 - **Elements of 2 SOF commands**
 - **6 Civil order police brigades**

Once again, the time for a focus on force generation is over. The time for a focus on force effectiveness is now. There is only one year until Transition, and the report identifies many areas of continuing challenges that make current transfer plans seem more cosmetic than real.

Figure 32: ANSF Forces and Force Goals: ANP

ANP End-Strength (September 2011 – September 2012)



ANP End-strength, Attrition, Recruiting, Retention, and Goal - September 2011 through September 2012													
Month/Year	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
End-strength	136,122	139,070	140,596	143,797	145,577	148,932	149,642	149,208	144,182	146,641	147,912	146,339	147,158
Attrition	-1,939	-2,452	-1,773	-1,895	-1,338	-1,608	-894	-1,747	-1,400	-1,691	-1,538	-1,980	-1,594
Recruiting	2,908	4,091	3,135	2,778	2,735	2,801	2,171	0	464	2,100	2,357	1,016	2,458
Retention	117	140	66	135	207	164	154	320	372	213	316	87	136
Goal	136,708	139,159	141,610	144,061	145,355	146,649	147,943	149,237	150,531	151,824	153,118	154,412	155,706

Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2012, p. 67.

Figure 33: Manning and Cost of Equipment of ANP

ANP STRENGTH, QUARTERLY CHANGE						
ANP Component	Authorized			Assigned		
	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Quarterly Change	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Quarterly Change
AUP	110,279	110,279	None	106,538	106,235	-303
ABP	23,090	23,090	None	22,243	21,928	-315
ANCOP	14,541	14,541	None	14,585	14,383	-202
NISTA ^a			None	2,437	5,953	+3,516
Other ^b			None	536		
ANP Total	156,910^c	157,000^c	+90	146,339	148,499	+2,160
CNPA	2,986	NR		2,622	2,581	-41
ANP + CNPA Total				148,961	151,080	+2,119

Notes: Q3 data is as of 8/21/2012. Q4 data is as of 11/20/2012; NR = Not reported

^a Personnel in training

^b Officer graduates awaiting assignment

^c Total ANP authorized figures are higher than the sum of the AUP, ABP, and ANCOP. It was unclear if other components were included in the ANP total.

COST OF U.S.-FUNDED ANP EQUIPMENT		
Type of Equipment	Procured	Remaining to be Procured
Weapons	\$366,079,788	\$14,288,272
Vehicles	\$2,687,549,123	\$19,386,607
Communications Equipment	\$201,958,600	\$42,500
Total	\$3,255,587,511	\$33,717,379

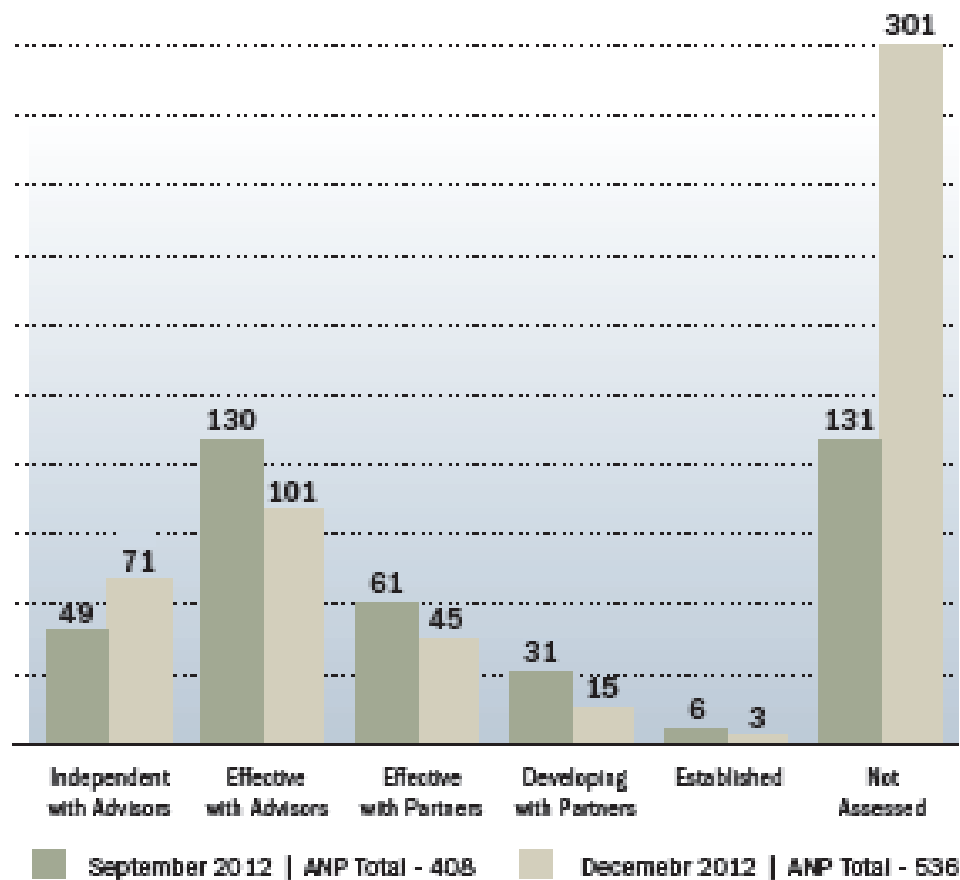
SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 84-85.

Figure 34: Limits to the Readiness of the MoIA: End 2012

Ministry of Interior Overall Rating CM3	Current CM	CM 1B Date
Chief of Staff / Special Staff		
Public Affairs	1B	Achieved
Inspector General	2B	2Q, 14
Legal Advisor	2A	3Q, 13
Legal Affairs	2B	3Q, 13
Intelligence	2B	2Q, 13
Democratic Policing	3	Indefinite
Gender & Human Rights	4	1Q, 15
DM of Counter Narcotics		
Counter Narcotics	2B	3Q, 13
DM of Strategy and Policy		
Strategic Planning	2A	2Q, 13
Policy Development	1B	Achieved
Force Management	2A	2Q, 13
DM of Security		
Afghan Uniform Police	2A	3Q, 13
Afghan Border Police	2B	2Q, 13
GDPSU	2A	2Q, 13
Anti-Crime	2B	3Q, 14
ANCOP-(G)	2A	1Q, 13
Operations Planning	2A	4Q, 12
Force Readiness	2B	2Q, 13
ALP	3	1Q, 14
Counter-IED	3	2Q, 14
DM of Admin and Support		
Personnel Management	2B	3Q, 13
Logistics	3	3Q, 14
Finance and Budget	2B	2Q, 13
Facilities and Installation	3	1Q, 14
Surgeon Medical	2B	3Q, 13
Info, Comms and Tech	3	4Q, 14
Training Management	3	2Q, 14
Acquisition and Procurement	2B	4Q, 13
Recruiting Command	2A	4Q, 12
Civil Service	2B	3Q, 13
DM APPF		
APPF	4	1Q, 14

Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2012, p. 51.

**Figure 35: Commander's Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Rating for the ANP
(January 30, 2013)**



- **“Independent with Advisors:** The unit is able to plan and execute its missions, maintain command and control of subordinates, call on and coordinate quick-reaction forces and medical evacuations, exploit intelligence, and operate within a wider intelligence system.
- **“Effective with Advisors:** The unit conducts effective planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status. Leaders, staff, and unit adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. Coalition forces provide only limited, occasional guidance to unit personnel and may provide “enablers” as needed. Coalition forces augment support only on occasion.
- **“Effective with Partners:** The unit requires routine mentoring for planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status; coordinating and communicating with other units; and maintaining effective readiness reports. Leaders, staff, and most of the unit adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. ANSF enablers provide support to the unit; however, coalition forces may provide enablers to augment that support.
- **“Developing with Partners:** The unit requires partnering and assistance for planning, synchronizing, directing, and reporting of operations and status; coordinating and communicating with other units; and maintaining effective readiness reports. Leaders and most of the staff usually adhere to a code of conduct and are loyal to the Afghan government. Some enablers are present and effective, providing some of the support. Coalition forces provide enablers and most of the support.
- **“Established:** The unit is beginning to organize but is barely capable of planning, synchronizing, directing, or reporting operations and status, even with the presence and assistance of a partner unit. The unit is barely able to coordinate and communicate with other units. Leadership and staff may not adhere to a code of conduct or may not be loyal to the Afghan government. Most of the unit’s enablers are not present or are barely effective. Those enablers provide little or no support to the unit. Coalition forces provide most of the support.”

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 75, 77.

Uncertain Progress in Many ANP Force Elements: Setting the Stage

There are far more serious limitations to the development effort for the various parts of the ANP than is the case for the ANA. The 2011 *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* provides a good starting point for assessing the limits in progress to date.⁵⁵

- Despite indicating positive developments in ANP force generation, NTM-A recently determined that 3,940 officers and 6,733 patrolmen were filling NCO billets; large numbers of officers and patrolmen placed against vacant NCO positions overstates the development of the NCO ranks. Removing officers and patrolmen from NCO-designated positions would result in an actual officer strength at 102 percent, patrolmen strength at 113 percent, and NCO-assigned strength at 66.7 percent against authorized positions. NTM-A and IJC, along with ANP leadership, will focus on growing the NCO corps by 12,700 in order to close this gap. (p. 34)
- Untrained patrolmen remain the biggest challenge for the AUP and NTM-A/CSTC-A, and the MoI continues to push the recruiting base in order to ensure all available training seats are used. As of September 2011, the AUP had a total of 11,919 untrained patrolmen and NCOs. AUP attrition remains the lowest of all police pillars at 1.3 percent, and has consistently remained below the monthly attrition objective of 1.4 percent for the last 11 months (November 2010 - September 2011). (p. 36)
- As of September 2011, the Afghan Border Police (ABP) end strength was 20,852 personnel. The ABP remains on schedule to meet all growth objectives for officers and patrolmen, but remains short of NCOs, with only 3,800 of an assigned total of 5,600. This shortfall, as well as the shortfall of untrained patrolmen, remains the primary focus for training efforts. (p. 35)
- Although overall attrition in the ANP has remained near target levels for the past year, high attrition continues to challenge the ANCOP in particular, which has experienced an annual attrition rate of 33.8 percent; although this has decreased significantly from 120 percent annual rate in November of 2009, it remains above the accepted rate for long-term sustainment of the force.... As a national police force rotating from outside areas, it has avoided the corruption that was once seen in other police pillars. Although ANCOP units' effectiveness initially suffered from runaway attrition that stemmed largely from extended deployments and high operations tempo, the adoption of a 12-week recovery and retraining period between deployments has improved this situation. (p. 34-35)
- Building a capable and sustainable ANP depends on acquiring the equipment necessary to support the three basic police functions: shoot, move, and communicate. Accordingly, significant equipment uplift for the ANP began during the reporting period, which is expected to increase the ANP's on-hand equipment to approximately 80 percent by the spring of 2012. Despite progress, however, the ANP remains underequipped as a result of fielding challenges. Due to these shortages, the MoI has developed fielding priorities based on operational requirements. To address the delay in processing supply/equipment requests, the MoI Material Management Center established a Customer Care Center in April 2011. This single point-of-entry clearinghouse for supply/equipment requests has been a success, significantly reducing response times. (p. 37-38)
- The ANP's logistics system remains particularly limited, both in facility development and in assigned and trained logistics personnel. The biggest challenge in developing logistics support to the ANP is the hiring and training of civilian personnel, as civilians make up 50 percent of the logistics workforce. Civilian hiring will continue to be a challenge until the MoI institutes civil service reforms. (p. 38)

⁵⁵ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 2011. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/October_2011_Section_1230_Report.pdf.

- The ANP has demonstrated improvement in its ability to conduct limited, independent policing operations and to coordinate operations with other ANSF elements. These improvements are largely attributable to a number of exogenous factors, including low insurgent threat levels in the given operating environment and ISAF enablers. ISAF mentor reporting shows that the majority of ANP units still rely heavily on coalition assistance, especially in contested areas. As with the ANA, the operational performance of ANP units is also suffering from U.S. and coalition force reductions. Each of the three ANP pillars saw an increase in the number of units that were not assessed due to recently-fielded units that are not reporting or not partnered due to lack of available coalition forces. Within the ABP, 11 of the 12 units were not assessed due to long standing partnering shortages. Additionally, four ANCOP *kandaks* located throughout theater were not assessed. Finally, within the AUP in key terrain districts, 17 of the 22 units not assessed were in RC-C. (p. 45)
- Currently, the MoI Force Readiness Report is the Afghan system for reporting ANP data. Unfortunately, at this time, the report only focuses on the statistics for personnel and equipment: shoot, move and communicate. There are no ratings associated with the data and no commander's assessment or narrative comments to describe issues and challenges. The positive aspect of the report is that the MoI collects, aggregates, and builds its own reporting products with minimal coalition oversight. (p. 46)

The April 2012 DoD report described some positive trends, but also showed the level of challenges that still remained:⁵⁶

- As of the end of the reporting period, [Figure 34] the MoI was assessed as needing significant coalition assistance, a CM rating of CM-3; the MoI is expected to achieve CM-2B next quarter. As of the last evaluation period, of the 30 total offices and cross-functional areas, 3 departments had a rating of CM-4, 11 achieved a CM-3 rating, 9 achieved a CM-2B rating, 4 achieved a CM-2A rating, and 2 achieved a CM-1B rating. Notably, Public Affairs recently Transitioned to CM-1B, joining Policy Development. Additionally, several departments were established during the reporting period, including Gender Affairs, Democratic Policing, Counter-IED, and Recruiting Command. Recruiting Command will have its first assessment next rating period. The corruption cross-functional area was dropped as each department now has corruption metrics as part of its evaluation. (p. 16)
- The ANP continues to show improvement, with 50 percent (219 of 435) of ANP units currently rated as "Effective with Advisors" or higher compared to 37 percent (80 of 218) in August of 2011. The number of ANP units covered by the CUAT system has increased dramatically – from 218 in August 2011 to 435 as of January 2012. The number of units rated "Independent with Advisors" increased from 0 in August 2011 to 39 in January 2012. (p. 43)
- Although the MoI demonstrated measured progress during the reporting period, it faces multiple challenges which risk impeding further development. The MoI faces persistent difficulties in creating and maintaining a sustainable force, including civil service reform and a logistics capacity within the ANP pillars. Further, the MoI remains significantly susceptible to penetration by CPNs in the fielded force. Due to the nature of its mission, the dispersed deployment of its forces, and the span of control, the Afghan Border Police is particularly vulnerable to potential influence by CPNs. The Afghan Government, in partnership with ISAF, has made only limited progress toward eliminating corrupt officials. ISAF and the Afghan Government are accelerating efforts to develop internal accountability systems and sustainable processes through ministerial development and reform initiatives that will enable prevention and detection of internal criminal activity, thereby reducing the influence of CPNs. (p. 17)
- ...spot inspections of the fielded force have shown that only 50 percent attend class, emphasis is being placed on having more students attend literacy training centers. (p. 18)

⁵⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, April 2012. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Report_Final_SecDef_04_27_12.pdf.

- While progress was not uniform across all sections of the ANP, some units, such as the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), are now highly effective, frequently partnering with ISAF forces in successful operations. Progress has been less rapid in other areas, such as the development of ANP logistics capabilities or the development of the Afghan Border Police. (p. 28)
- Tajiks are significantly overrepresented in the force, Pashtuns are represented proportionately to the Afghan population, but Hazara, Uzbeks, and others are underrepresented to varying degrees. (p. 29)
- ...efforts are needed to address the current NCO shortage of 8,316 and the 16,700 untrained patrolmen. During March, MoI successfully took their first steps to self-govern the imbalances in the ANP. In addition to temporarily freezing recruitment, the Minister of the Interior also created a commission to address the imbalances in rank and location. Initial indications are that this self-initiated Afghan commission will emphatically state that over-strength police officers (p. 29)
- Although ANCOP units' effectiveness initially suffered from high attrition that stemmed largely from extended deployments and high operations tempo, the adoption of a 12-week recovery and retraining period between deployments has improved this situation. (p. 30)
- In addition, the commander of the ANCOP continues to use new processes to reduce attrition rates and ensure that leaders are held accountable for poor performance. As a result of these efforts, ANCOP attrition in March 2012 was only 0.5 percent, one of the lowest rates since tracking began. Though the ANCOP still suffers from significant attrition levels, averaging 1.9 percent over the past six months, the ANCOP continues to meet growth objectives. (p. 30)
- The ABP is the pillar of the ANP responsible for securing and safeguarding the Afghan border as well as providing security up to 50 km away from the border. As of March 2012, the total strength for the ABP, including police in training, was 24,927 -- an increase of 2,968 personnel from the previous reporting period. However, the ABP continued to face a shortfall of NCOs, with only 4,041 of a total 5,622 authorized billets filled and an additional 942 officers and patrolmen assigned to NCO billets. The NCO shortfall remains the primary focus of ABP training efforts. (p. 31)
- At present, the ABP's most significant challenge remains the development and training of its Blue Border mission (defined as rule of law enforcement at Border Crossing Points and Air and Rail Ports of Entry), as opposed to the Green Border mission (defined as patrolling borders between the points of entry). ABP also face challenges in the development of its other core institutions such as Border Coordination Centers, Operational Coordination Centers, training facilities, and headquarters. In the absence of these capabilities, the ABP is not effectively securing and controlling Afghanistan's borders. In the near future, NTM-A will work with the MoI and ABP to better define the Blue Border force structure requirements, identify and procure essential Blue Border mission-specific equipment, and develop a Program of Instruction to satisfy Blue Border development requirements. Green Border planning teams will continue to work with IJC to find the right balance and cooperation between ABP and ANA for border security outside the Blue Border mission. (p. 31)
- Similar to the AAF, the ABP is also challenged by corruption and the penetration of CPNs. Although many police units are performing well, some police units still undermine the rule of law, fail to take action against criminal or insurgent threats, extort the population, and engage in a range of other criminal activities. ISAF and the Afghan Government continue to work together to address ANSF corruption and have successfully removed numerous members of the ABP involved in criminal activity. (p. 32)
- Untrained patrolmen and the lack of a sustainable logistics system remain the biggest challenges for the AUP. NTM-A and the MoI continue to emphasize recruiting in order to ensure all available training seats are used. As of March 2012, the AUP had a total of 12,500 (20 percent) untrained patrolmen and NCOs. AUP attrition remains the lowest of all police pillars, averaging 1.0 percent per month during the reporting period. (p. 32)

- As of October 2011, the ANP needed approximately 20,000 more NCOs within the following year. An increased emphasis on NCO training during the reporting period added 9,003 NCOs to the ANP, reducing the shortfall to 10,997. In addition to a shortage of NCOs, the ANP also faces a significant amount of assigned but untrained patrolmen. (p. 33)
- Between October 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, ANP training capacity increased from nearly 14,500 to 14,584. The ANP was expected to reach approximately 16,000 personnel by the end of December 2011; however, severe delays at National Police Training Center (NPTC) – Wardak impeded achievement of this goal. NTM-A continues to seek efficiencies while developing the necessary capacity to grow the size of the ANP, develop the force, and create a mature, sustainable ANP Training Management System infrastructure to support force training. Training is currently conducted at 30 formal training sites, but this total will eventually decrease to approximately 11 permanent sites in 2014. Across all police pillars and all courses, 21,907 students have graduated since the beginning of October 2011. (p. 33)
- The ANP remains under-equipped as a result of fielding challenges, including battle loss replacement needs and the closure of Pakistani GLOCs. Due to equipment shortages, the MoI has developed fielding priorities based on operational requirements. To address the delay in processing supply/equipment requests, the MoI Material Management Center established a Customer Care Center in April 2011. This single point-of entry clearinghouse for supply/equipment requests has been a success, significantly reducing response times. (p. 35).
- As a result of a deliberate decision to place initial focus of force generation on ANP policing units, the development of enablers – in particular logistics capabilities – was delayed and is not expected to be fully self-sufficient until late 2014. NTM-A began to shift its efforts to logistics development in mid-2011, and it will continue to be a key focus in 2012. (p. 35)
- The ANP logistics system requires significant coalition assistance at the regional level and below in order to effectively sustain the ANP. The biggest challenges to improvement in the logistics system are the recruitment of qualified police and civilian logisticians and the training of personnel to use the approved MoI logistical system. (p. 35)
- Further, the ANP's logistics system remains particularly limited in personnel system accountability, primarily in managing the assignment and training of logistics personnel. A major challenge in developing long-term logistics support to the ANP is the hiring and training of civilian personnel, as civilian authorizations make up 50 percent of the logistics workforce. Due to pay disparity between the MoI civilians, other opportunities for literate candidates with technical skills, and shortfalls in hiring processes and civilian personnel management, civilian hiring will continue to be a challenge until the MoI institutes civil service pay reforms. Additionally, the MoI completed the manpower build-out of the sustainment system by adding approximately 2,100 logistics positions (1,400 uniformed, 700 civilian) into the SY1391 *tashkil*. (p. 36)
- The United States provides the ANSF with the majority of required mentor teams. The drawdown in U.S. forces will result in a decreased number of partnered units, creating additional requirements for other coalition partners. (p. 36)
- Cycle 13 CUAT data showed the number of reports for partnered units within the ANP increased from 231 in August 2011 to 347 in February 2012. This total number may also include ANP units that did not previously submit a CUAT report (e.g., in the case of newly fielded or recently partnered units). The number of units reported as uncovered or unassessed increased from 31 to 88, due to an overall increase in units reporting. (p. 39)
- While surge recovery will decrease the number of personnel available to partner with the ANP, the projected impact of the surge recovery on the performance of the ANP is unclear. ANP partnering levels have consistently lagged behind those of ANA units. An important aspect of the Security Force Assistance concept is the deployment of partner and mentor units trained specifically for police missions. This focused effort is anticipated to result in a more productive partnering/advising relationship and increased ANP capabilities, especially in the civil policing missions and functions. (p. 39)

- Overall, the number of units that were not assessed decreased from 17 percent in August 2011 to 14 percent in January 2012. As of February 2012, data from the Provincial Response Company and all Operational Coordination Centers (OCCs), both provincial and regional, were added to the overall ANP effectiveness ratings, accounting for the slight increase in the overall number of submitted reports versus October 2011 data. Overall, 74 percent of units are rated as “Effective with Partners” or higher, compared to 69 percent in August 2011. (p. 43)

The July 30, 2012, SIGAR Quarterly Report described similar challenges facing the ANP and MoIA,⁵⁷

- This quarter, the total strength of the ANP was 146,641, according to ISAF’s June 2012 personnel status report. Of that number, 82,424 were assigned to the Afghan Uniform Police, 22,057 were assigned to the Afghan Border Police, and 14,586 were assigned to the Afghan National Civil Order Police. These numbers are smaller than those reported in SIGAR’s April 2012 quarterly report. SIGAR is reviewing the new numbers to determine the reason for the decline. (p. 77)
- As of June 18, 2012, more than 8,600 ANP personnel had graduated from 15 police training courses; 810 were currently enrolled. (p. 79)
- Low literacy rates affect the ANP as well as the ANA...Like the ANA recruits, ANP recruits receive 64 hours of literacy and arithmetic training during their basic training and an additional 248 hours of instruction to bring them to Level 3 or “functional literacy.”120 CSTC-A noted that to achieve functional literacy, ANP students are tested to determine whether they are ready to progress to the next level of training. As of July 1, 2012, the success rate for the entire ANSF was 93.3%; a breakdown by force was not available. (p. 79)
- Political will within the MoI has grown, as demonstrated by the removal this spring of close to 70 police officers in western Afghanistan on corruption and abuse charges. The MoI has also responded to requests from the CJATF-Shafafiyat and ISAF to stop “recycling” officials who have been removed for corruption; there were 19 egregious cases of such reassignments in 2011, but only one in the first half of 2012. (p. 103)

The December 2012 report by DoD noted that,⁵⁸

Although progress was not uniform across all sections of the ANP, some units, such as the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), are now highly effective, frequently partnering with ISAF forces in successful operations. Progress has been less rapid in other areas, such as the development of ANP logistics capabilities, and the development of the Afghan Border Police. The ANP remain significantly behind their ANA counterparts in developing the capabilities necessary to transfer to full Afghan lead by the end of 2014.

Uncertain Progress in Many ANP Force Elements: The Level of Overall Progress at the End of 2012

It is difficult to assess many of the most current trends in the ANP because the reporting and readiness standards keep changing. For example, the December 2012 DoD report stated that, “[A]t the end of February, the ANP began reporting attrition as only unanticipated losses to the ANP. ‘Dropped From Rolls’ (DFR) and ‘Other’ have replaced ‘AWOL’ and ‘WIA’ as counting toward attrition. ‘Other’ is members who have left the

⁵⁷ SIGAR *Quarterly Report to Congress*, July 30, 2012. <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2012-07-30qr.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 66.

ANP because they disappeared, were captured, or were transferred to other ANSF units.”⁵⁹

The DoD did report, however, that,⁶⁰

The current approved end-strength for the ANP is 157,000 personnel, which they are currently estimated to reach by February 2013. This figure represents the projected requirement to support transition to Afghan security lead. As of the end of the reporting period, the overall ANP force level reached 147,158 personnel, a decrease of 2,484 from the force level in March 2012. This force includes 24,566 officers, 43,632 non-commissioned officers, 74,956 patrolmen, and 4,004 initial entry trainees.

The ANP did not meet its end-strength growth targets this reporting period, finishing 8,548 below the target goal of 155,706. Earlier this year, the ANP were recruiting at a pace to achieve the October objective ahead of schedule. However, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) ceased recruiting during April 2012 to focus on rebalancing ANP assets.

The ANP had more low-level recruits than necessary at the time, but was facing a shortage of officers and NCOs. The MoI opted to pause input of new (and mostly low-level) recruits to focus on ensuring that officers and NCOs were serving in actual officer and NCO billets, as well as to effect the reassignment of personnel from over-strength units to under-strength units.

The MoI also used the recruiting pause to improve overall force quality by using training capacity to provide NCO training for promotable patrolmen and to train untrained patrolmen. Although this pause will slightly delay ANP from meeting its end-state force growth goal, NTM-A sees this as a positive sign of the MoI's increasing independence and ability to assess its own recruiting needs accurately.

As a result of the pause, the ANP did not recruit any personnel in April and recruited only 464 in May, after resuming recruitment late in the month. The ANP General Recruiting Command (ANPGRC) recruited 7,931 police during the last four months. NTM-A and MoI have implemented a plan to mitigate the shortfall and are focused on meeting the end-strength goal by February 2013.

As part of the rebalancing of the force, the ANP were able to remove 3,400 personnel from over-*tashkil* positions and began assigning them to units where they were needed. The recruiting pause also enabled untrained patrolmen to receive formal police training. There had been success in recruiting for direct entry NCO courses, but almost no success in reducing recruiting of untrained patrolmen until the recent recruiting freeze. NTM-A leadership continues to engage and assist the MoI to overcome the issues of untrained patrolmen and low NCO numbers.

The ANP generally reflects the ethnic make-up of local communities, as personnel typically serve in the area where they join the force. However, when aggregated at the national level, Tajiks are significantly overrepresented in the force and Pashtuns are represented equivalent to the Afghan population, but Hazara, Uzbeks, and other ethnic groups are underrepresented to varying degrees.

As of September 2012, the shortfall of NCOs in the ANP was approximately 9,464. However, due to the increased NCO training capacity resulting from the recruitment pause, the ANP added 3,341 NCOs since the beginning of the reporting period.

The training base capacity of NTM-A and the German Police Project Team (GPPT) has decreased as a result of the closure of temporary training sites at Mazar-e Sharif, Shouz, and Sheberghan. These sites were closed as part of the overall Transition plan that will consolidate the number of

⁵⁹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 68.

⁶⁰ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 68-73.

training sites from 30 to 13 by December 2014. National Police Training Center Wardak has expanded to its 3,000-man training capacity. ANP Training General Command and NTM-A are working to ensure that throughput is improved as soon as possible.

...The key to the ANP's professional sustainability following the 2014 transition is an enduring and effective training management capability. The ANP Training General Command (ANPTGC) continues to assume increasing control of training issues, with emphasis on "Reform Training" for untrained patrolmen, recruiting for direct NCO ("Satanman") training (expected to start early September), and the transition of the training system to Afghan control. The transition of course scheduling continues, and ANP ownership will be in-place to enable the ANPTGC to design, deliver, and implement the next 12-month iteration of the course tracker from January to December 2013. Furthermore, ANPTGC has taken the initiative to assist training the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). APPF training is running at three sites, with more being scheduled as capacity is identified.

The training priority over the coming months will focus on supporting training for promotable patrolmen, replacing losses due to attrition, and shifting the focus of the ANP from COIN missions to a rule-of-law-based police force.

Total training attrition for Solar Month September was 5.9 percent, which was an increase from last month's attrition rate. Reasons for attrition include academic failure, drug use, discipline, and voluntary withdrawal. The variation in these figures is consistent with previous reporting periods.

The ANP remains under-equipped as a result of fielding challenges, including battle loss replacement needs and the closure of Pakistani GLOCs earlier this year. Distribution of vehicles in particular was slowed by the GLOC closures. To mitigate the border closure situation, many vehicles en-route to Pakistan, or planned for the Pakistan GLOC, were rerouted via the Northern Distribution Network (NDN). This route was able to deliver some vehicles and equipment, but at considerably less volume than the Pakistan GLOC or Karachi port. The re-opening of the Pakistan GLOC has increased on-hand quantities and ability to complete fielding of the ANP.

Light Tactical Vehicles (LTVs), Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs), and other non-tactical rolling stock are still arriving via the Trans-Siberian Railway or the NDN. Up-Armored (UA) HMMWVs remain the top priority item to field once the vehicles arrive in country from Pakistan. Security along the GLOC remains an issue and has impacted the amount of material crossing the border. Weapons and communication equipment fielding has continued since the reopening of the GLOCs without unexpected delays.

...much like the situation with ANA equipment, problems arise when delivering the equipment from national (and largely ISAF-run) depots to smaller regional depots and to the units themselves. When equipment is fielded to the ANP, either staged by local pickup in Kabul or a convoy, CSTC-A has little oversight over the ultimate destination and unit receiving the equipment. Diversion of equipment from its intended unit as stated on the CSTC-A issuing order has occurred, although the exact rate of equipment diversion remains unknown. Often, far more equipment than necessary is delivered to one unit at the expense of others, giving rise to a situation in which some units are over-equipped while others are under equipped. In addition to diverted equipment, damaged equipment is often not reported by the units. This causes lower "on-hand" numbers at the unit level than what is documented as the quantity fielded.

During the reporting period, the ANP logistics system has made steady progress toward self-sufficiency, although major challenges remain. As a result of a deliberate decision to place initial focus of force generation on ANP policing units, the development of enablers – in particular logistics capabilities – was delayed, and ANP logistics capabilities are not expected to be self-sufficient until late 2014. NTM-A began to shift its efforts to logistics development in mid-2011, and this is now the main focus of NTM-A. Logistics will remain the main focus area for the training mission throughout 2012 and 2013. NTM-A initiated a detailed planning process, to review the current logistics system, and in conjunction with IJC and MoI, to develop a more sustainable system to meet ANP requirements beyond 2014.

ANP logistics nodes at the regional level and below continue to require Coalition assistance in order to effectively provide sustainment. The biggest logistics challenges include the recruitment of specialized policemen and the retention of trained logisticians, while ensuring fielded equipment is operational. Additionally, logistics continues to challenge the operational readiness of the ALP. Each District Chief of Police is authorized three AUP personnel to assist in ALP management and supply; however, the level of support varies from district to district. NTM-A is working with available ALP logisticians to establish better accountability of issued equipment, better coordination of services, and improved knowledge of the logistics system.

...Development of an ANP maintenance capability is underway, as poorly maintained equipment affects unit performance in the field. Currently, the ANP is entirely reliant on contracted maintenance provided through an NTM-A-managed contract. NTM-A and maintenance experts from the MoI are focusing on the establishment of ANP mobile response maintenance teams, with recovery capability within the current manning and equipment levels. In order to improve the ANP's maintenance capability and increase the level of confidence across the ANSF, several projects are ongoing. Expanding current NTM-A-provided maintenance training will address the necessary human capital investment to enable a basic maintenance capability within the ANP. NTM-A will pursue improvement in the ANP maintenance program and the use of recovery assets. Furthermore, NTM-A expects to refine sustainment requirements for eight MoI Supply Points (MSPs) and seven Regional Logistics Centers (RLCs). In conjunction with MoI, NTM-A plans to simplify the requirements and requisition process and develop infrastructure and contract management capabilities.

The January 30, 2013, SIGAR Report echoed similar challenges:⁶¹

- The ANP's literacy program, like the ANA's, is based on a 312-hour curriculum. According to CSTC-A, in order to progress from illiteracy to functional literacy, a student may take as many as seven tests. The student's performance determines if he or she progresses to the next training level. As of December 1, 2012, the ANP success rates for the passing these tests were: 90% for Level 1 literacy, 90% for Level 2, and 86% for Level 3... Since the start of the ANP literacy program in October 2009, the number of ANP graduates at Level 3 is 23,743. (p. 86)
- As of the end of this quarter, the ANSF health care system had 746 physicians—a decrease of 139 since last quarter—out of 1,032 needed. Of these, 544 were assigned to the ANA and 202 were assigned to the ANP. In addition, it had 7,552 medical personnel (including nurses and medics)—a decrease of 975 since last quarter—out of 10,825 needed. (p. 87)

Problems in the Afghan Border Police (ABP)

The DoD 1230 Report for December 2012 highlighted some of the problems in the ABP. It provided the usual mixture of current problems and hopes for the future – although it downplayed the real-world level of corruption, ties to power brokers, and creation of independent fiefdoms within the ABP:⁶²

During the reporting period, ABP made slow progress toward self-sufficiency. ABP's mission is difficult, with a number of inherent factors preventing rapid progress toward self-sufficiency. Afghan terrain is some of the most difficult in the world, and many border posts are located in remote areas. The challenges involved in fielding the ABP in remote outposts and keeping them supplied is enormous, and would test even a far more advanced and well-equipped nation.

There are no vehicle maintenance facilities within a reasonable proximity of some units, and no trained mechanics available in rural areas. The ABP relies on Coalition Forces for the provision of

⁶¹ SIGAR *Quarterly Report to Congress*, January 30, 2013.
<http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2013-01-30qr.pdf>.

⁶² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 72-72.

basic needs such as fuel and water. The ABP continues to be hampered by illiteracy, lack of accountability, and corruption; these conditions are expected to endure beyond 2014. Modest improvements in these areas have been realized through ongoing ABP training, education, and professionalization efforts.

A number of other issues hinder ABP development. Correctly accounting for personnel remains a major issue, especially with “ghost soldiers” (soldiers who are no longer assigned but for whom the unit continues to collect pay). Although LOTFA’s Electronic Payroll System (EPS) has been successful, it is challenging both in terms of the management of the software development process and internal control of payments, resulting in such problems as “ghost police,” double payments, and incorrect entitlements. LOTFA and NTM-A are engaged in several collaborative processes regarding the payroll data and pay distribution, including an effort to eliminate data problems by interfacing and coordinating the EPS, the Afghan Human

Resource Information Management System (AHRIMS), the Afghan Financial Management Information System (AFMIS), the ID card system, biometric identification, electronic salary methods (like EFT and payments to mobile phone networks), and the GIRoA I process. It is expected this effort will eradicate data inconsistencies. In addition to re-engineering the payroll system, pushing the roll-out of the Web-EPS system, and continued checking and analysis of EPS data, LOTFA will review the effectiveness and value of their Monitoring Agent services in the field. NTM-A audits and data analysis will continue to be used to identify pay inaccuracies.

Pay and promotion issues also negatively impact ABP development. The lack of banking facilities in some regions, along with the security situation along routes used for the movement of bulk funds, have prevented personnel from getting paid in a timely manner. ABP training is currently not as extensive as the training most other ANP receive. Training shortfalls include communications, driving, maintenance, counter-IED, computers, and literacy. More NCO training is needed. Many ABP outposts remain static, and rarely conduct border security missions beyond the vicinity of their outposts.

ABP and ANSF leadership have engaged in multiple discussions with their neighboring counterparts to improve border relations. Efforts to build pan-ANSF supporting relationships and improve cooperation along neighboring borders are enabled by Coalition Forces. However, better communication, coordination, and cooperation with Afghan National Army (ANA), providing layered and “in extremis” support, will be required to reduce insurgent operations in the border zone.

Positive momentum is evidenced by the ABP’s mission at the regulated points of embarkation, including five airports and 14 border control points (BCPs). ABP has also embraced the Combined Comprehensive Border Strategy (CCBS), in which ISAF supports GIRoA with focused and coherent nationally endorsed aims to decrease the ingress of homemade explosives (HMEs) precursors, insurgents, and weapons by concentrating effort at selected BCPs. NTM-A is currently equipping and training police at these sites in order to support the initiative. It is assessed that if sufficient security and force protection can be provided, the BCP mission is the best area to continue professionalization and corruption reduction efforts. Although the ABP is crucial to future border security, the overarching solution must first and foremost include the will of GIRoA to control the flow of illegal and illicit materials, coupled with the strategic impetus to improve diplomatic cooperation with neighboring countries.

Problems in the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP)

The DoD 1230 Report for December 2012 was relatively optimistic and focused hopes on the future. At the same time, it sharply downplayed the real-world level of corruption and ties to power brokers. It also stressed the AUP’s conversion to a regular police force without any clear picture of timing or indication of how the AUP would get the needed support of other elements of the justice system, security from insurgent attacks, and

support from effective local governance.⁶³

...As part of a deliberate decision made when the AUP was still in the early stages of development, initial focus was on force generation and support to the COIN campaign. As increasing areas of Afghanistan transition to ANSF lead and the ANA is better able to handle the military aspects of the security mission, increased consideration is being given to AUP reform as part of security sector reform. This includes the further professionalization of the AUP to create a police service that can actively deal with criminality and has a sense of integrity, a code of ethics, an ability to engage with the community, and respects the rule of law.

NTM-A plans to assist the international community in the long-term evolution of the AUP from a security force into an effective police service by creating the conditions required for the police to support the rule of law. The desired end-state is for the AUP to be a competent police service that provides internal security, protects borders and respects the rule of law. Key areas of influence for police professionalization are the development of the MoI, the institutionalization of training, the enablement of sustainment functions, and the promotion of international cooperation. These areas will constitute the main focus areas for 2013.

Currently, roughly 17,552 (20 percent) of the AUP are untrained and approximately 12,800 (15 percent) are un-vetted. Full vetting for new AUP recruits occurs when they arrive at their first training center. Many instances have occurred in which Provincial Chiefs of Police (PCoPs) place newly recruited patrolmen directly into local units from the recruiting centers, bypassing the training centers. Vetting of these assigned but untrained patrolmen is therefore delayed or never completed. The Direct Entry *Satanmen* (NCOs), as well as officers, all complete training and are fully vetted before assignment to their units; therefore, at a minimum, all of the patrolmen's supervisors are all vetted. ISAF is working with the MoI to prevent police candidates from bypassing training centers, and by extension, bypassing the vetting process as well as continuing to retroactively vet those AUP that already bypassed the training centers.

One major impediment to AUP development in this area is the low capabilities of the Afghan justice sector. The AUP's capabilities, both geographically and functionally, have far surpassed those of the Afghan judiciary and justice sector. The AUP have the authorization to hold suspects for up to 72 hours, but beyond that judicial intervention is required. AUP do not act as investigators of crime as police forces do in many Western nations. The Afghan judiciary is in charge of criminal investigations and prosecution. In many areas, AUP personnel may arrest a suspect but are forced to release them after 72 hours due to a lack of support from the justice sector. Increasing the capabilities of the Afghan justice sector and judiciary, as well as the coordination between them and the AUP, will be a priority through 2013.

The Afghan Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and Police Special Forces

There are effective elements within the ABP and AUP, and they will need continued support, but many elements will almost certainly revert – as the Iraqi police force did after December 2011 – to being corrupt, inadequate local forces. The exceptions that will need consistent outside support are the ANCOPs and Police Special Forces. These forces have proved to be consistently effective in counterinsurgency and security operations.

⁶³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 72-74.

The ANCOP force has become a major asset in counterinsurgency and the DoD reported in December 2012 that some of its past problems with attrition now seemed to have been sharply reduced,⁶⁴

ANCOP continues to be an extremely effective and viable force for deployed security operations throughout Afghanistan. Attrition has been consistently low, with the 12-month average being 1.27 percent, and with June, July, August and September at or below 0.2 percent. During the reporting period, ANCOP communications were upgraded, leading to major improvements in ANCOP operational effectiveness. Unit equipping is improving across the force; however, shortfalls exist in some of the more contested regions. ANCOP fielding of specialized and sensitive equipment, as well as the construction of new facilities, should be completed by the third quarter of 2013, enabling ANCOP to achieve Capabilities Milestone 1A. During the reporting period, ANCOP have been heavily employed throughout Afghanistan, supplementing the regular ANP.

The Police Special Forces units are smaller, but effective. The DoD reported in December 2012 that,⁶⁵

The ANP continued to recruit and field elite police units under the command and control of the General Directorate of Police Special Units (GDPSU). The GDPSU are trained by and partnered with ISAF Special Operations Forces (SOF) in support of the COIN strategy. During the reporting period, the GDPSU changed its command and control (C2) structure to allow central control over the Provincial Response Companies (PRCs), and thereby assuming responsibility for their training, manning and equipping. The C2 change is improving and enabling better effects synchronization among all the Special Police Units (SPU), thus providing the Afghan government with a mature and highly functional National Special Police force.

The GDPSU continues to be directed by the Deputy Minister for Security. The directorate remains structured with national and provincial units that are trained, organized, and equipped to tackle the high-value malign threats throughout Afghanistan. The national units consist of Commando Force (CF) 333, Crisis Response Unit (CRU) and Afghan Task Force (ATF) 444; multi-functional special police units capable of high-risk arrests and hostage rescue missions. CF333 and ATF44 have a national focus, while the CRU is focused primarily in the capital region.

The provincial units currently consist of 19 Provincial Response Companies (PRC), which are responsible for Special Police (SP) operations within their provincial Areas of Operations, conducting operational tasks that directly support the Provincial Chiefs of Police (PCoP). The PRCs specialize in civil order security and high-risk arrests. Each PRC is supported by a team from the Investigative Surveillance Unit (ISU).

GDPSU is at approximately 85 percent manning, with the PRCs estimated to reach Full Operating Capability (FOC) by end 2012. ISAF SOF has deployed with an average 62 percent partnered force ratio over the past six months. Progress is also being made in establishing an enduring career path for all policemen, with progression through the ranks that includes assignments in both national and provincial units and instructor posts at the SPTW and SPTC.

The special police units include some nine ranger-like commando units with some 900 men each and a strength of 9,200.⁶⁶ The NDS has ranger or special force-like elements as well.

⁶⁴ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 71-72.

⁶⁵ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 74-75.

⁶⁶ ISAF. March 2013.

Problems in Assessing Police Readiness and Capability

The December 2012 1230 Report again raises serious question about the CUAT and other effectiveness reporting on the ability of ANP units to stand on their own. The report describes the readiness of police units as follows:⁶⁷

The ABP had 22 units (43 percent of the total required) reported as “Independent with Advisors” or “Effective with Advisors”, which is down 29 percent from the 31 reported in Cycle 14. Of the 31 reported in the top two categories in Cycle 14, seven (23 percent) were not reported in Cycle 15. The ANCOP did have a measured increase in units reported as having achieved “Independent with Advisors” or “Effective with Advisors” status. Sixteen units reported as having achieved top-third status, which is an increase of 23 percent from the 13 reported in Cycle 14. Of the 13 reported in the previous cycle, four (31 percent) did not report in Cycle 15. There has been a significant decrease in reporting on police units, and for this reason it has been difficult to make an accurate assessment of progress. Of the 408 required police units, 179 (44 percent) have achieved ratings of “Independent with Advisors” or “Effective with Advisors” this cycle.

This lack of coverage indicates that such ratings have little real meaning if the police are not able to perform traditional policing rather than light counterinsurgency operations. These problems again are rendered even more questionable by the fact that the entire CUAT system is being revised to cover operational performance for the first time and needs to be further revised to establish separate rating systems for the ANA and ANP at some unspecified point in the future.⁶⁸

The practical dilemma that requires far more detailed and transparent aid planning is that the police are unlikely to meet a meaningful level of capability at any predictable point in the future – almost regardless of the outside level of aid and training. At the same time, rushing reductions in outside trainers/advisors is likely to be a far more serious problem for the ANP than the ANA. The 1230 Report shows that there are 609 units in the fielded ANP force. A total of 265 have advisors or partners rating the units’ effectiveness. A total of 143 are autonomous or not assessed and 201 more are not covered. This is a total of 44% of the 295 ANA units that are not rated by trainers or advisors.⁶⁹

One answer may be to take as many of the police out of the paramilitary role as possible, focus on the ANA for key combat tasks, and strengthen the ALP to create local forces with a vested interest in the security of the areas they protect. Also important is to focus on protecting key population areas and not try to create a transfer of responsibility that attempts to push the ANSF into truly defeating the insurgents. If the other elements of the Afghan government are successful in Transition, a war of political attrition may become a two-way street. The government may be able to wait out the insurgents as it wins the confidence of more of the people and the insurgents lose support.

⁶⁷ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 93.

⁶⁸ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 85.

⁶⁹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 87.

It is also clear, however, that US willingness to sustain most of the cost of aid and advisors requires an unambiguous Afghan government commitment to provide bases, facilities, and a status of forces agreement. It also requires Afghan success in creating a stable and effective mix of Afghan forces within several years after 2014. There is no point in reinforcing failure – or in paying for it.

Dealing Realistically with the Afghan Police Force

It has long been clear that generating effective police forces presents even more problems than generating an effective ANA, and that adequate outside funding and trainers/mentors/partners will be critical. Moreover, success will be far more dependent on the level of outside aid and funding in civil programs.

Official reporting on the various elements of the ANP has disguised a corrupt force with many elements that are actively involved in power brokering and which has little overall counterinsurgency capability. This force alienates many Afghans, and is not supported by the necessary elements of governance and other parts of the justice system in much – if not most – of Afghanistan. Corruption and incompetence are major problems in Kabul as well as most other areas.⁷⁰

The majority of current indicators as well as experience in past efforts to build regular police efforts in wartime – such as in Iraq – warn that the bulk of the Afghan police will be corrupt and have at best limited effectiveness. Nothing can be done from the outside that will determine the relative post-Transition strength of the central government versus local power brokers in controlling the police, or the rise of local police leaders that become the equivalent of mini-warlords. The question is not how good the AUP and ABP will become as Transition proceeds, but how bad.

The answer is that the best elements of the police will continue to support the central government and the MOIA, but that most of the police are likely to remain as they are. Other elements will become tied to local power brokers, while still other elements will become passive or reach a *modus vivendi* with any insurgent or hostile group that threatens them. The Western dream of creating an effective civil police force will not survive Transition and engagement with reality in much, if not most, of the country.⁷¹

The end result will often be corrupt or passive elements tied to local leaders or that cooperate with insurgents. This will be the result not only of problems within key elements of the police force, but also of a lack of effective civil governance and the other elements of the rule of law in the field – without the support and control of which a civil police force cannot be effective. The failure to tie the assessment of police development

⁷⁰ For recent, on-the-scene reporting, see Azam Ahmed, “In Kabul’s ‘Car Guantánamo,’ Autos Languish and Trust Dies,” *New York Times*, February 19, 2013; Kevin Sieff, “To cut Afghan red tape, bribery is the norm,” *Washington Post*, February 19, 2013. Also see, UNDP, *Police Perception Survey – 2011: The Afghan Perspective*, Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR) Surveys, Kabul, Langer Research Associates, December 2011; UNDOC, *Corruption in Afghanistan, Recent Patterns and trends*, December 2012,

http://www.unodc.org/documents/frontpage/Corruption_in_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf, p. 7-21.

⁷¹ The scale of the problems involved in the ANP is laid out in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 67-76; and Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2013, p. 84-87.

to these other two criteria for success has made current effectiveness ratings of the ANP largely meaningless – a problem compounded by deliberately ignoring the scale of corruption.

Moreover, even if these problems did not exist, the entire police development effort would be limited by the lack of progress in governance or the creation of the other elements comprising the rule of law and the permeating climate of corruption, interference by power brokers, and the impact of criminal networks. In addition, there is already growing political pressure that has the potential to divide the ANSF by ethnicity and may be a prelude to post-withdrawal power struggles.

Furthermore, corruption is endemic within the police, as is the abuse of power and extortion. The unclassified readiness and capability assessment systems currently being used to show progress within the ANP are virtually meaningless since they do not assess the integrity of police units. Worse, unclassified reporting does not indicate the scale of police coverage in any given district, show whether the other elements of governance and the justice system are present, or whether there are even detention facilities. No unclassified effort is made to assess areas where the police (and sometimes the ANA) do not interfere with insurgent operations or have de facto arrangements that allow both to operate in ways that affect commerce, transportation, and Transition.

The present system for reporting on progress in the police is almost solely oriented towards force generation and support of counterinsurgency. The system that ISAF uses to assess the ANP (which is nearly identical to the ANA assessment system) overstates the capabilities of the police because it focuses on manning, equipping, and training – instead of focusing on more important factors such as corruption, loyalty, and the functioning of the justice system. The ANP is essentially being trained to become a light paramilitary counter-insurgency (COIN) force, with little in the way of traditional police training. In most areas, the police are not linked to a functioning justice system at all.

These issues affect every aspect of the Afghan government. Moreover, the present separation of the police development effort from matching efforts to improve governance and the rule of law creates yet another set of problems. Police forces cannot operate in a vacuum. They need a successful government presence and popular governance to win the support of the people and support for their justice efforts. There must be prompt justice that the people accept and find fair enough to support or tolerate. Incarceration must set acceptable standards and jails must not become training and indoctrination facilities for insurgents and criminal networks.

Accept Marginal Success in Progress Made in the Rule of Law and Dealing with the Current Level of Corruption

The scale of the problems involved in establishing the rule of law effort are summarized in recent SIGAR and DoD reporting as described below:⁷²

Insecurity has continued to impede expansion of rule of law, especially at the district level. Prolonged dispute resolutions in the formal justice system have led many rural Afghans to view it as ineffective and inaccessible. In addition, widespread corruption and inadequate transparency

⁷²Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2013, p. 111.

continue to stifle development of a self-sustaining rule of law system. Furthermore, DoD noted that the Afghan government's lack of political will to operate and maintain justice programs and facilities has hindered justice development.

USAID noted that the judiciary has also not had sufficient political will to establish genuine independence from the executive branch. Rule of law activities will need to be included in the overall transition effort and will be most successful in the areas where capable governance has followed stabilization, according to DoD.

Although the Afghan government and the international community have identified "law and justice for all" as an NPP, they have not agreed on program specifics that would lay out a clear and verifiable roadmap to improve the Afghan justice system. This quarter, donor dissatisfaction at the continued failure to finalize the justice program led the European Union to indicate that it will put on hold its future funding for the sector until the program has been endorsed. All of the NPPs were supposed to be endorsed by July 2011. The UN Secretary-General noted that the program's complexity and wide scope presented challenges, although there was hope for an endorsement of the NPP in early 2013.

Weaknesses within both the formal and informal justice systems, along with ineffective linkages between the two systems, continue to lead many Afghans to go to the Taliban for dispute resolution. The Taliban process is based on stern religious precepts, but is also rapid, enforced, and often considered by Afghans as less corrupt than the formal system.

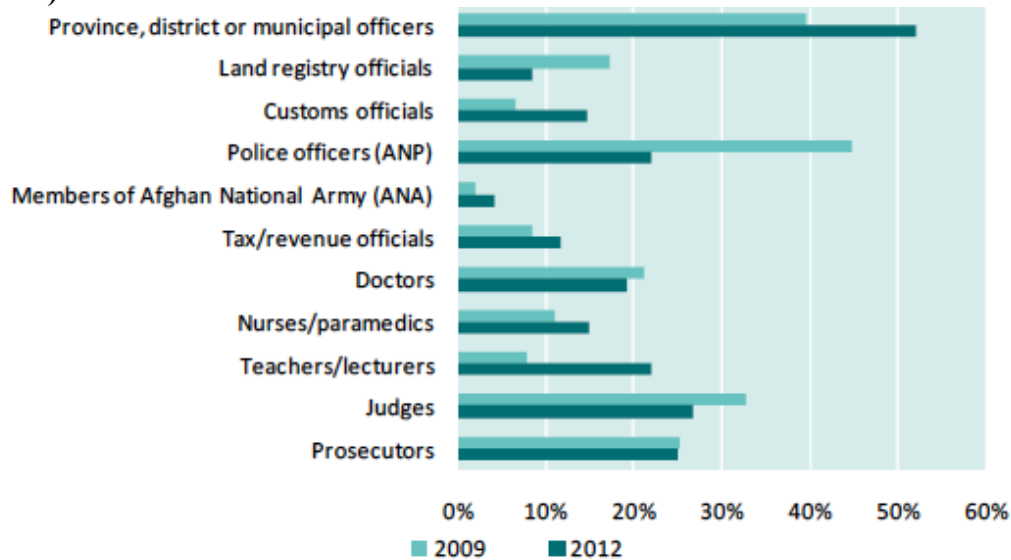
The broad scale of the problem of corruption in the police – placed in the context of a UN survey of Afghan popular perceptions of corruption in the government and other elements of the rule of law – is shown in **Figure 36**. The good news is that perceptions of police corruption – while still high – have dropped. The bad news is that public opinion has not improved significantly regarding the rest of the justice system, and the problem of corruption is much higher in the south and east where the insurgents present the most serious threat. The UN also found that,⁷³

Some 50 per cent of employees in both the National Police and the Border Police admitted to receiving ... help in their recruitment, as did roughly half of all provincial, district and municipal officers. Approximately 6 per cent of these officials also acknowledged having paid bribes during their recruitment...Of particular concern is the recruitment of school teachers, during which over half received assistance and more than 21 per cent also conceded to the payment of bribes. Furthermore, while between 24 and 30 per cent of prosecutors, Hoqooq and Ministry of Justice officers stated that they received assistance during recruitment, a smaller percentage of officials in the judicial sector admitted having paid a bribe in order to secure their job in the civil service.

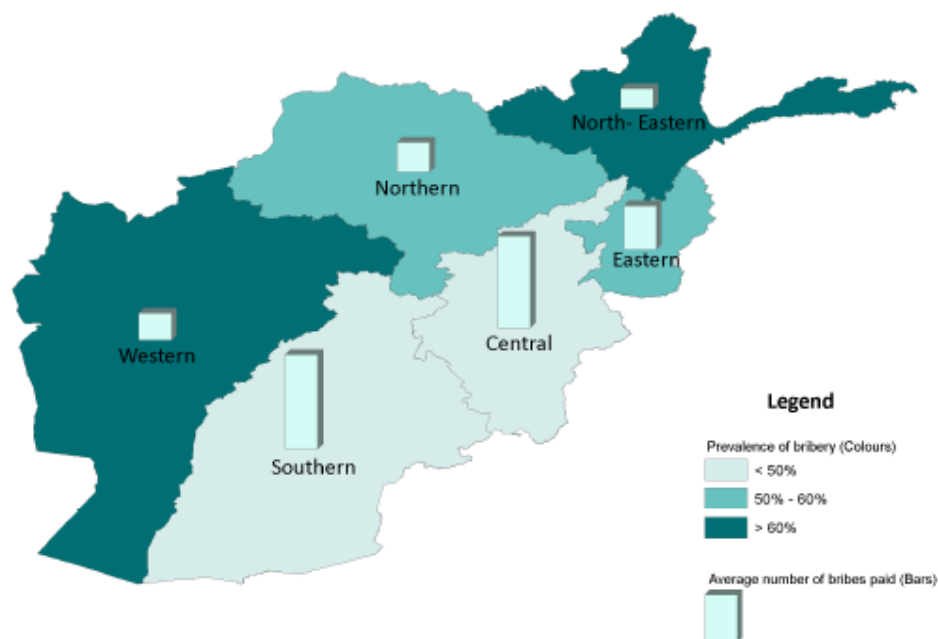
⁷³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and trends*, 2012, p. 8 & 10.

Figure 36: Popular Perceptions of Corruption in the ANSF, Government, and Justice System

Percentage of bribe payers who paid a bribe to selected types of public official (2009 and 2012)



Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by region (2012)



Source: *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and Trends, 2012*, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, p. 20 (© 2012 United Nations; reprinted with permission).

Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay

The various elements of the ANP will face far more serious problems than the ANA in maintaining their momentum towards becoming effective forces as US and other ISAF forces leave. Much again depends on the outcome of the 2014 election: whether enough Afghans perceive it as legitimate, whether an effective leader emerges, whether it brings enough national unity to win and sustain popular support, whether the new government proves to be able to govern effectively, and whether, the MoD, ANA, and AAF receive effective support in the field.

Failed leadership is likely to quickly produce a splintered ANP divided along ethnic and geographic lines, combined with high level political interference and emphasis on Presidential control that turn much of the ANP into a mix of elements supporting local power brokers and factions and elements still under Presidential and MoI control. Weak governance and a weak justice system will have far more effect on the various elements of the ANP than the ANA and make it impossible for them to grow and mature or even maintain their current level of effectiveness in areas where the other elements of governance are lacking and/or the government in Kabul lacks popular support.

Sustaining outside aid will also present more problems for the various elements of the ANP than the ANA. The US has already shown in Iraq how easy it is to give up on a police training mission if the force comes under pressure or the Afghan government does not provide full and effective support. There will be far too little US and allied personnel in the field to monitor and support local police elements – many of which already have corrupt and/or ineffective leadership at equivalent of the District or Provincial Chief of Police levels. The US and its allies will at best be able to provide sustained support to the ANA at the corps level. Support to the ANP in the field will be minimal, and no amount of advice to the MoI will cope with weak Afghan political leadership, corruption, and deep internal political tensions and divisions.

Moreover, cuts in support for any effective efforts to aid civil governance and the rest of the justice system are already beginning to decline and are likely to decline much more quickly after 2014. There problems are already being compounded by President Karzai's efforts to take control of various elements of the justice system for his political purposes.

At the same time, the ANP is far more vulnerable to the internal pressures that can undercut its effectiveness. They lack the status of the ANA and they already are far more divided and corrupt. They are largely local in character and more vulnerable to ethnic and sectarian divisions, and to power broker influence – particularly if the election or leadership that follows fails. They are less mature than the ANA, have been rushed into the field with less support and emphasis on sustainment and higher level enablers, and they lack the needed support of effective governance, the other elements of a justice system, and detention facilities in many districts

Elements of the ANP already are selling positions and promotion. Higher level corruption at every level from the province through the MoI remains a serious problem and could grow much worse if the 2014 election fails to produce effective leadership, if ANA officers start seeking profits to protect themselves from the collapses of the force, or various power brokers start bidding for ANP support for money, power, or along ethnic lines.

Struggles between power brokers and factions, efforts by leaders within the ANP to become local power brokers, and sustained targets of the ANP in key areas by insurgents can all catalyze the collapse or division of immature forces. A shortage of enablers and effective support by the ANA can further weaken the force either because key elements of the ANP do not get enough post-2014 outside support, or its intelligence, logistic, O&M, medical, transportation, training base and other key enabling elements fail to mature as expected.

What is not clear is whether there is any credible chance that the US and its allies can win the political support to provide the needed funding and the additional enablers and partners the ANP needs in addition to the support needed by the ANA. In an ideal world, they should of the 2014 election produce and effective leader and governance. In practice, a brutal level of triage may be necessary. The US and its allies may have to choose between an ANA effective enough to sustain a layered defense and anything more than a limited effort to support the key paramilitary elements of the police. The grim fact is that some form of “afghan good enough” requires a strong ANA. It can muddle through in spite of a weak and divided ANP – albeit at a serious cost in terms of justice, human rights, popular support, and unity.

The Afghan Local Police (ALP)

The ANA and ANP, however, are only part of the story. As has been explained earlier, there are other Afghan forces that are shaping the new emphasis on layered defense and that present funding and security challenges that affect the post-Transition Afghan economy. ISAF has made real progress in select areas in creating local police that respond to the regular police and government, and where the creation of such security forces is part of a broader effort to create civil governance and economic aid efforts.

In a few areas, this has triggered active local Afghan resistance to the Taliban and other insurgents. Both visits to such areas and independent press reporting indicate that such developments are still in a very early stage, but have made local police forces and resistance the key focus of insurgent military action in 2013, showing that they do offer real promise.⁷⁴

The Current Status of the ALP

The ALP are one of these forces. SIGAR reports that the ALP had 18,435 members as of January 30, 2013. ALP members are mentored by the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) and ISAF Regional Commands East and Southwest. The goal was to provide a total of 30,000 members in 99 districts and the ALP headquarters in Kabul by 2014. On December 9, 2012, the MoIA increased the ALP target strength from 30,000 to 45,000, a move that was supported by coalition forces. The ALP is currently operational at 92 sites.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ The author has visited ALP units in 2011 and 2013, and Afghans who independently began resistance to the Taliban. For press reports, see Carlotta Gall, “Villagers Take on Taliban in their Heartland,” *New York Times*, March 21, 2013, p. A1.

⁷⁵ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 87; ISAF, March 15, 2013.

The Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A) and Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) obligated \$59.7 million of Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) funds to support the ALP and cover its salaries from October 2011 through June 2012.⁷⁶ Overall, the US has obligated \$108.6 million to support the ALP, with \$40.6 million of that as direct contributions to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and \$68 million as “in kind” funds used by the US to support the ALP.⁷⁷

The current deployment of the ALP relative to the transition Tranches and risks discussed earlier is shown in **Figure 37**. This Figure reported a force goal or Tashkil of 45,000. It indicated that 100 ALP units had so far been validated, 60 were operational but unvalidated, and the ALP were active in 33 transition districts with manning of over 8,800 men; An additional 1,637 were already active in protecting critical infrastructure.⁷⁸

The Changing Role of the ALP

As US official reporting indicates, the ALP effort goes far beyond simply creating a militia and potentially offers a key way to address critical Transition problems in providing effective security and reasons to be loyal to the central government at the local and district levels.⁷⁹

The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) began conducting Village Stability Operations (VSO) in February 2010. VSO is a bottom-up COIN initiative that establishes security areas around rural villages to promote local governance and development. VSO uses Afghan and ISAF Special Operations Forces embedded in the community full-time to help improve security, governance, and development in more remote areas of Afghanistan where the ANSF and ISAF have a limited presence.

Each VSO consists of a 12-man team that embeds in a village and regularly engages local Afghans, enabling a level of situational awareness and trust otherwise unattainable. VSO teams are supported by a Village Stability Platform (VSP), which includes a range of enablers and supporting elements. Along with medical, air, civil affairs, and military information teams, VSPs also include units focused on linking the district and provincial levels of governance and development to the national government. Further, Provincial Augmentation Teams, in partnership with Provincial Reconstruction Teams, help VSPs to build local governance and improve development. In districts with VSO, Afghan satisfaction with access to essential services has uniformly increased over the last three months. Further, analysis of attack levels before and after a VSP is established indicates, after a brief increase in insurgent attacks, a steady improvement in security conditions throughout the community. The VSO initiative has resulted in such noticeable improvements in security, governance, and development that Taliban senior leaders have identified the VSO initiative as a significant threat to their objectives.

Significant success has prompted the program to expand. The VSO initiative began with five VSPs covering 1,000 square kilometers; as of this report, CJSOTF-A has 6,000 personnel in 103 locations throughout Afghanistan, covering approximately 23,500 square kilometers. To support this growth, the VSO initiative now supplements Special Forces with conventional forces. Currently, the 1-16th Infantry and the 1st/505th Parachute Infantry Regiment are augmenting

⁷⁶ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, July 30, 2012, p. 80.

⁷⁷ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 87.

⁷⁸ ISAF, March 15, 2013.

⁷⁹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 30, 2011, p. 66-67.

Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) presence to enable the expansion of VSO sites across the country.

The report stated that there were more than 48 operational ALP sites, and more than 50 additional sites pending, at the end of 2011:⁸⁰

Established in August 2010 by President Karzai, the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program is part of the VSO initiative. ALP is a village-focused MoI initiative that complements ISAF's COIN strategy by training local Afghans in rural areas to defend their communities against threats from insurgents and other illegally-armed groups. The ALP program is a complementary component to the VSO program; although not all VSO sites have ALP units, all ALP units are a part of an existing VSO site. In the latter phases of a VSO, village elders may, through a *shura*, elect to establish an ALP unit.

These prospective ALP sites are validated by the MoI, which conducts an evaluation and officially approves the district for ALP development. A district is considered officially validated when the Afghan Government officials meet with the local officials to formally agree that the given district demonstrates both a need and a desire for an ALP unit. The MoI has approved 100 districts for ALP units as of September 2011; of those, 48 districts have been validated by their district *shura* and collectively represent a force of about 8,100 ALP. In conjunction with counsel from U.S. Special Operation Forces and IJC, the Afghan Government has authorized an ALP end-strength of 30,000 patrolmen.

The MoI requires ALP candidates to be 18-45 years of age. They must be nominated by local community *shuras*, vetted by the MoI, and biometrically-enrolled in the ALP program. Weapons must be registered in order for the ALP unit to receive the MoI funding provided for authorized program positions. ALP members sign one-year service contracts, work part-time, and are paid approximately 60 percent of the basic salary for an ANP patrolman.

...U.S. Special Operations Forces currently conduct a three-week ALP training program that introduces basic security and policing skills...As a purely defensive force, ALP units are not equipped for offensive operations nor are they permitted to grow beyond the size in their *tashkil*, which amounts to approximately 30 patrolmen per village and 300 per district. ALP patrolmen have detention but not arrest authority, and conduct investigations under the direct supervision of the Deputy District Chief of Police.

Despite these limitations, ALP units have proven effective in disrupting insurgent activities by denying them safe havens and limiting their freedom of movement; the improved security enables development and governance projects for the community...Each ALP unit coordinates its operations extensively with the ANSF, coalition forces, local *shuras*, and Afghan Government officials, which helps build and strengthen the link between local governance and the central government. The units are also overseen by the village *shura* that originally sponsored them, as well as U.S. Special Operation Forces. This extensive oversight by both Afghan and coalition members helps to ensure ALP operations are effective and conducted in accordance with Afghan law.

The ALP program continues to increase in strength and effectiveness, and the ALP have proven to be a significant threat to the insurgency in key areas throughout Afghanistan. In response to this, insurgents have engaged in intimidation campaigns and targeted assassinations against ALP members and their families. These attacks have largely failed to intimidate ALP forces and local communities, which continue to defend their villages effectively against insurgent attacks.

The April 2012 DoD 1230 report noted that,⁸¹

⁸⁰ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, p. 66-67.

The MoI has approved 99 districts for ALP units; of these, 58 have been validated by their local *shura* and the MoI, a 21 percent increase from the previous reporting period. The total force of 12,660 ALP represents a 56 percent increase from the previous reporting period. The Afghan Government has authorized an end-strength of 30,000 ALP. However, ALP growth in the south and east – the main focus areas of the program – continues to be challenged by insurgent intimidation efforts and tribal infighting.

The ALP program continues to expand and gain popular support. Tactical and technical proficiency of units gained during the 2011 fighting season has improved ALP capacity and performance. The sustainability of these gains, however, depends on coalition enabler support, MoI engagement, and continued USSOF mentoring.

Despite significant success, the ALP face multiple challenges. The program is heavily dependent on U.S. Government funding and USSOF training, mentorship, and oversight. Achieving the approved total force of 30,000 ALP guardians will challenge the capacity of CFSOCC-A forces, and may require additional support from USSOF and conventional force enablers. In part mitigating this concern, current plans call for Transitioning some USSOF teams from directly training ALP to an “ISAF overwatch” role for mature ALP units, which would increase CFSOCC-A’s ability to train, mentor, and oversee ALP with decreased force requirements.

ALP face many challenges, including ethnic and tribal tensions. For example, in Baghlan Province, ethnic tensions have resulted in clashes between Pashtun-dominated ALP and Tajik-dominated ANP. Although local *shuras* are largely effective in ensuring fair tribal and ethnic representation in ALP units, some *shuras* and ALP commanders actively resist recruiting certain ethnicities, which can create significant ethnic tension in multi-ethnic villages. To mitigate these risks, USSOF works closely with the *shuras* and District Chiefs of Police to promote a multi-ethnic approach, which is a key to stability.

The proliferation of independent, non-Afghan Government sanctioned militias, which operate outside the VSO/ALP framework, threatens to undermine the legitimacy and progress of the programs. Although limited in number, these unauthorized organizations threaten to damage the ALP “brand,” especially those that misuse the ALP name to further their own interests.

Finally, during the reporting period, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released its annual report on the protection of civilians, which discussed the ALP at length. UNAMA noted that ALP had improved security in and kept insurgents out of ALP areas, but maintained some criticisms from its 2010 report, which included references to isolated issues in recruitment, vetting, training, and discipline. To address these occurrences, CFSOCC-A created ALP Assessment Teams charged with investigating misconduct allegations and related issues affecting the ALP at the district level.

The December 2012 1230 Report stated,⁸²

Despite significant successes, the ALP program also faces challenges that stem in part from heavy dependence on U.S. government funding and USSOF training, mentorship, and oversight. Achieving the authorized force of 30,000 ALP personnel will challenge the capacity of SOJTF-A forces, and may require additional support from USSOF and conventional force enablers. ALP must also overcome personal, ethnic and tribal tensions. In most instances, local *shuras* are effective in ensuring fair tribal balance and ethnic representation in ALP units. However, some *shuras* and ALP commanders actively resist recruiting certain ethnicities, which can create

⁸¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, April 30, 2012, p. 65-66.

⁸² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 30, 2012, p. 79-80.

significant ethnic tension in multi-ethnic villages. USSOF are currently working closely with the MoI, village shuras, and the DCOP to resolve this issue.

The ALP program also faces logistical challenges. Logistical resupply is hampered by many variables including a low Afghan literacy rate, a lack of understanding their own supply process, and distances to Regional Logistic Centers (RLC). These challenges are compounded by difficult terrain, weather, as well as varying degrees of corruption. These factors threaten to undermine the legitimacy of the Afghan government in rural areas and the durability of the program. One initiative to better enable the ALP's understanding of the logistics system is through Coalition-assisted education, specifically literacy programs provided to ALP members and their villages. ISAF personnel are also working at the RLCs to mentor their Afghan counterparts.

The proliferation of independent non-GIRoA sanctioned militias, which operate outside the VSO/ALP framework, threaten to undermine the legitimacy and progress of the program. Although limited in number, these unauthorized organizations threaten to damage the ALP "brand," especially when they inappropriately use the ALP name to further their own interests. Although there are a few incidences to contrary, the ALP has favorable name recognition in the majority of Afghan provinces in which polling has been conducted.

Underscoring the effectiveness of the program, the Taliban Senior Leadership (TBSL) have identified infiltration of the ALP as a primary objective to weaken the program. As of August 2012, a small minority of insider attacks (3 out of 78) have involved members of the ALP. SOF remain deeply embedded with ALP, more so than other ISAF units working with AUP or ANA. Although this exposes them to much more direct contact with possible infiltrators, also it also allows for a better understanding of the human terrain and an opportunity to identify possible threat indicators.

To mitigate the risk of insider threats, SOJTF-A has taken active measures to re-validate all 16,474 ALP personnel. This revalidation process is currently 52 percent complete, with less than one percent removed due to nefarious activities or counter-intelligence concerns. This process, which is currently ongoing, is very similar in design to our initial screening/validation methodology. It begins at the local level by conducting shuras and intimately involving local elders, who must vouch for each ALP member, ensuring he remains in good standing. Each member's application paperwork is re-reviewed by various personnel from the Coalition, MoI, NDS, and the DCOPs. If any ALP member "flags" as suspicious, additional counter-intelligence (both Afghan and Coalition) measures are taken. If it is determined that an ALP member is unfit, he is removed from the program. These processes are non-negotiable. In addition, NDS plans to embed three agents per 100 ALP to identify possible infiltration by the enemy. The prevention/elimination of Insider Threats will remain COMISAF's top force protection priorities.

During the reporting period, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released its annual report on the protection of civilians, which noted that ALP had improved security and kept insurgents out of ALP areas. The UNAMA report also maintained some criticisms from its previous 2011 report, which included references to issues in recruitment, vetting, training, and discipline. To address these occurrences, MoI responded by creating ALP Assessment Teams charged with investigating misconduct allegations and related issues affecting the ALP at the district level.

Interviews with ISAF experts in March 2013 indicated that current plans call for further expansion of the ALP into threatened areas in the north, west, center, and eastern Afghanistan. They are based on ISAF's conclusion that,⁸³

In a tribal society proximity is the key – 17% of the populace (5 million people) is protected by the ALP. The ALP forces successfully defend their positions 88% of the time. They support local governance efforts covering 31% of the population (9.8 million).

⁸³ ISAF, March 2013.

...The ALP is considered to be the #1 threat to the Taliban, as articulated by the senior Taliban leadership. The ALP is recognized as an integral part of the ANSF force structure is popular with local leaders and people...

The ALP program has continued its measured growth, with attrition rates much lower than the ANSF at 1.1% per month...

The ALP program is firmly under the control and supervision of the MoI, through the AUP and DCOP, with local accountability to their communities through the village elders.

At \$270 million a years to sustain 45,000 ALP, this is a cost effective way to provide necessary security infrastructure in areas where it is need most.

The Challenges in the ALP Program

There is obvious hype and spin in some of this wording, and the percentages of coverage do not make sense for a force that is still growing and at half its planned size. The ALP can also present a wide range of potential political and security problems if it does not remain under MoI control as Transition takes place and due to the risk that elements will serve local or tribal interests or abuse their power. As noted earlier, the ALP do add to the cost of Afghan forces.

It is also unclear that they can be set up and maintained without a major presence of highly skilled US or Afghan SOFs, military, and aid workers in the field. The history of similar forces has sometimes been one of relatively rapid collapse when an outside presence (and money) leaves and all the problems in governance, local corruption, and local customs return. The creation of real ALP units has also led to the creation of unofficial “copycat” units – or the self-rebranding of military units – that are abusive, corrupt, and tied to local power brokers.

As the DoD reported at the end of 2011,⁸⁴

Despite its significant success, the ALP program faces a number of challenges. The program is heavily dependent on Special Operations Forces for training, mentorship, and oversight. The approved expansion to 30,000 ALP patrolmen will likely strain the capacity of the coalition Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan, and may require additional conventional forces in order to adequately support projected ALP growth.

Further, the proliferation of independent, non-sanctioned militias outside the VSO framework threatens to undermine the legitimacy and progress of the ALP program. Although limited in number, these unauthorized groups exacerbate the concern that the ALP program risks empowering local strongmen who will either use the ALP program to incorporate their own militias into the government structure, or will brand their militias under the ALP title to further their own illegal interests. Illegally-armed militias in Kunduz Province, for example, posing as ALP patrolmen, have been collecting illegal taxes and have engaged in a number of armed conflicts with other local groups, degrading local security conditions and fostering negative perceptions of the ALP program. Also during the reporting period, a Human Rights Watch report accused some ALP units of abusive practices. ISAF has undertaken to investigate these allegations. The ALP is also challenged by ethnic tensions; although *shuras* are largely effective in ensuring

⁸⁴ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 30, 2011, p. 66-67. For further reporting, see David Alexander, *Afghan security contractor oversight poor: Senate report*, Reuters, Washington, October 8, 2010; Ray Rivera, “Obstacles Hinder Formation of Afghan Security Force, Report Says,” *New York Times*, November 1, 2011; Congressional Research Service, *Wartime Contracting in Afghanistan: Analysis and Issues for Congress* <http://www.scribd.com/doc/73041739/Wartime-Contracting-in-Afghanistan-11142011>.

fair tribal and ethnic representation in ALP units, some units actively resist recruiting certain ethnicities, which can create significant ethnic tension in rural villages

Sustaining the ALP presents major challenges both in funding and in providing trainers and partners that can keep such forces effective and limit the risk that they become corrupt or serve local power brokers, warlords, or even the insurgents.

President Karzai reinforced these Transition problems – as well as the broader problems created by the ethnic divisions within Afghanistan – by disbanding another force called the Critical Infrastructure Police (CIP) that was set up by ISAF in Afghanistan’s four northern (and largely non-Pashtun) Balkh, Kunduz, Jowzjan, and Faryab provinces. Elements of these forces were certainly corrupt and supported northern leaders like the governor of Balkh Province, who had little loyalty to Karzai. This police force had some 1,200-1,700 members per province and was paid more to keep them from extorting the population than to provide added security. Nevertheless, the net effect of disbanding this force was to compound ethnic tensions – particularly as Karzai did little to deal with the corruption and abuses of regular and local police who were Pashtun or more directly under his control.⁸⁵ Moreover, President Karzai forced the US to withdraw some SOF trainers for ANSF units in March 2013. It is clear that control of the ALP will be a continuing issue, and part of Afghanistan’s internal power struggles, as long as the ALP exists.

But, the other side of the equation is that the ANP is also sometimes corrupt and abusive, generally lacks the same local stake in resisting the insurgents, and seems equally prone to human rights abuses. This is not a perfect world, and Afghanistan is one of its “less perfect” regions. An ALP force that is committed to defending a given area, resists the Taliban, and offers hope for a less repressive future is one that merits continued support as long as – in balance – it offers so many advantages in security while it does less harm in virtually every other area than any available alternative.

Shaping the Future: Momentum versus Decay

The success of the ALP will depend as much on the quality of the 2014 election, and the level of leadership, governance, and national unity that follows as the ANA and ANP. The difference, however, is that the ALP is a far cheaper force to sustain, and can function even if Afghanistan becomes far more divided.

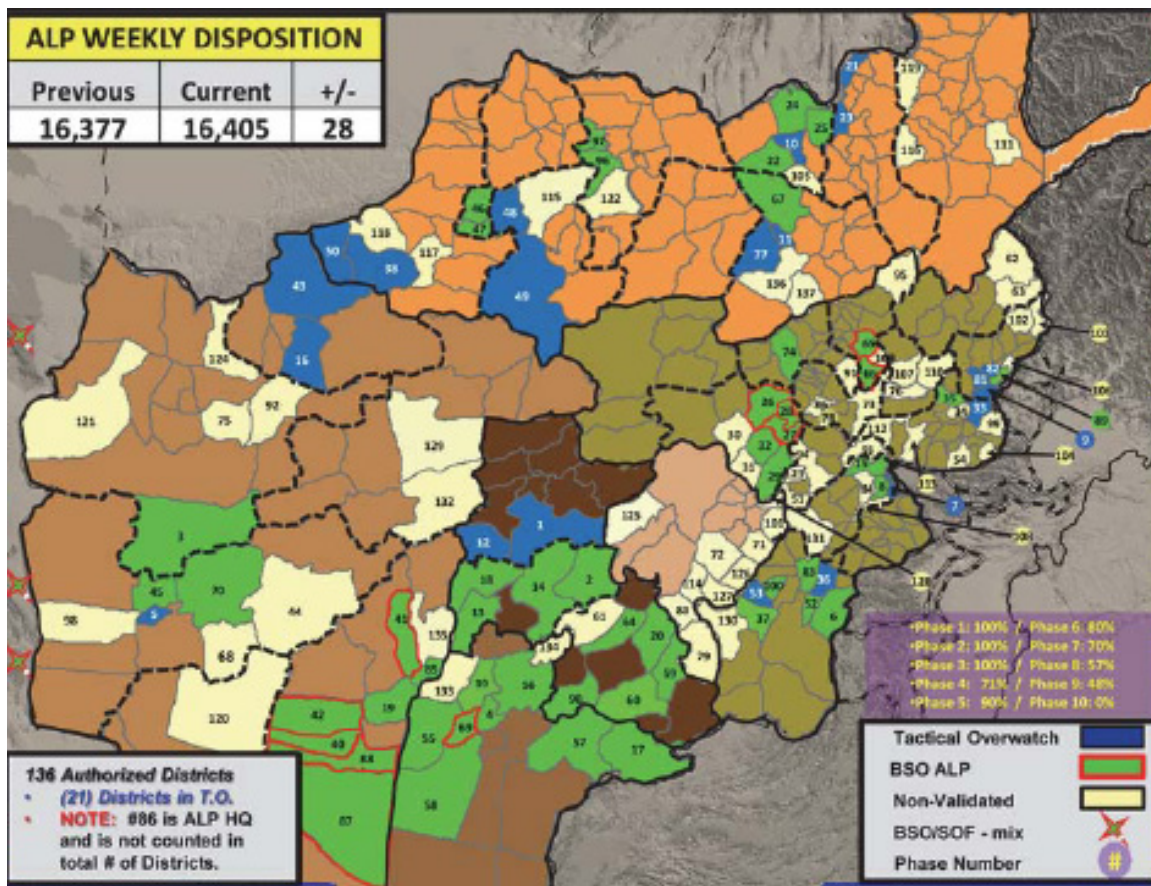
The ideal solution to shaping the ALP after the end of 2014 is a strong, effective Afghan leader and government, an expending level of governance and rule of law, and effective MoI leadership that both controls the ALP and gradually integrates the best elements into the ANP. This ideal is unlikely to become real. What is more likely is that the ALP will have to be used as a local defense forces that copes in part with the continuing weakness of the ANP.

Unlike the ANP, the ALP has a vested stake in local defense and security. If the Afghan government in Kabul is weak, and the country divides into regions dominated by factions and power brokers, the ALP can still function at a local level if they have limited financial support, access to weapons, and enough protection from the surviving elements

⁸⁵ Matthew Rosenberg and Alissa J. Rubin, “Afghanistan to Disband Irregular Police Force Set Up Under NATO,” *New York Times*, December 26, 2011.

of the ANA so the insurgents cannot attack and defeat them piecemeal and establish control on an area by area basis.

This does not mean that the end result will not be ALP that abuse their power, alignments with power brokers, and the creation of more local militias under the guise of the ALP. The need for local defense forces with such abuses may, however, be the inevitable result of the other failures of Transition. “Afghan good enough” is not likely to be pretty, but “muddling through” on a basis that offers future hope and limits the insurgents may well be the best real-world options.

Figure 37: ALP Map as of September 26, 2012

Note: This map is badly out of date. The changes as of March 4, 2013, were

September 26, 2012 March 4, 2013

Weekly Active Strength	16,405	21,014
Force Goal or Tashkil	30,125	45,000
Validate ALP units	73	100
Unvalidated Active Units	63	69
Transition Districts	-	33
Men in Transitioned Districts	-	8,839
Men Protecting Critical Infrastructure	-	1,637

Note: The report as of September 26, 2012, reported 392 BSO ALP in Kandahar, 1,540 in Helmand, 564 in Wardak, and 562 in Kapisa, for a total of 3,057.

Source: ISAF, March 2013 and December 1230 report, p. 81.

Private Security Contractors and the Afghan Public Protection Force

President Karzai has created another, potentially greater problem for the economics of Transition by trying to rush the disbandment of private security forces (PSF) in ways that seem more oriented toward enhancing his power over security contracting and key aspects of government, military, and aid spending than increasing security.

Figure 38 shows that just the portion of private security companies (PSCs) working for the DoD totaled 20,375 in the fall of 2011. They have been responsible for securing ISAF sites and convoys, diplomatic and non-governmental organization personnel, and development projects. ISAF and diplomatic missions, along with their development partners, employed some 34,000 contract security guards from PSCs, of which some 93% were Afghans.⁸⁶ In the January 2013 SIGAR Quarterly Report, 35 PSCs were operating in Afghanistan and 12 of these will continue to provide diplomatic security after Transition; the report does not detail the number of personnel involved in these PSCs.⁸⁷

Figure 38: Private Security Personnel Working for the Department of Defense in Afghanistan

	As of 7/7/2011 PSC Contractors	As of 12/9/2011 PSC Contractors	5-Month Difference PSC Contractors
U.S. citizens	693	570	-123
Third-country nationals	1,282	897	-385
Afghan nationals	13,330	18,908	+5,578
Total	15,305	20,375	+5,070

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 2012, p. 84.

No one doubts that private forces have been a problem, but so is setting impossible standards for replacing them and putting security functions into the hands of new, corrupt, and incapable central government forces. The DoD reported in October 2011 that,⁸⁸

By 2010...many PSCs were operating outside of Afghan law and customs as well as U.S. Government requirements, and PSC performance was often marked by poor discipline and safety. As a result, President Karzai issued Presidential Decree 62 in August 2010 directing many PSCs to be disbanded by December 2010 and replaced by the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). ...Although the decree included exceptions for Embassies and diplomatic personnel, it soon became clear that the APPF could not adequately replace PSCs in such a short time period. In order to allow time for the APPF to develop, the Afghan Government, together with the

⁸⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 30, 2011, p. 66-67.

⁸⁷ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 87.

⁸⁸ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, October 30, 2011, p. 66-67.

international community and ISAF, developed a 12-month bridging strategy for the further implementation of Decree 62.

The strategy is divided into categories to address the three distinct types of PSC operations: diplomatic, development, and ISAF. Diplomatic entities are exempt from Presidential Decrees and associated regulations applicable to PSCs. In contrast, at the conclusion of the bridging period, development entities and ISAF are expected to contract for their security services through the APPF. The 12-month bridging period began on March 22, 2011, and terminates on March 20, 2012. At the end of this period, as determined by its capacity and capability, the APPF will increasingly assume responsibilities, in priority order, for the security of ISAF and ANSF construction sites and for ISAF bases. In the event the APPF does not possess the capacity or capability to assume this responsibility, there is a conditions-based extension in the bridging strategy to allow PSCs to continue to provide services for an additional 12 months. The bridging strategy also called for disbanding seven PSCs due to close ties with Afghan officials. During June and July 2011, ISAF replaced all contracts held by these seven PSCs, which included 34 contracts and nearly 4,000 guards.

Of the 46 remaining PSCs, 43 PSCs have renewed licenses and have been certified as compliant, while the remaining three continue to work with the MoI to become relicensed. All remaining PSCs, however, barring the extension of the current bridging strategy, will be disbanded by March 2012, with the exception of those PSCs providing security services to diplomatic activities, which will continue to operate indefinitely.

...ISAF and the U.S. Embassy are assisting the MoI to develop the management and command and control necessary for the APPF to meet the needs of the coalition and the international community. The APPF currently has a guard force of approximately 6,400, and is expected to integrate approximately 14,000 guards who are expected to Transition from existing PSCs to the APPF, while also generating additional forces of no fewer than 11,000 guards. In total, approximately 25,000 guards will be required by 2012 in order to support ISAF and implementing partner security requirements.

Key observations from the initial assessment indicated that the APPF was unable: 1) to execute and maintain the business operations necessary to remain a viable and solvent business; 2) to man (recruit, vet, train), pay, equip, deploy, and sustain guard forces to meet contract requirements; 3) to negotiate and establish legal and enforceable contracts with customers for security services; 4) to command and control security operations across Afghanistan; 5) to meet the requirements of the bridging strategy. Additionally, the APPF has not created an operational State-Owned Entity to support business operations essential to manage and execute contracted security services.

In sum, the APPF is not on track to assume the responsibilities for security services performed by PSCs, which, barring the extension of the current bridging strategy, are projected to be disbanded on March 20, 2012. Combined planning efforts are ongoing to resolve the identified issues in a timeframe that is consistent with President Karzai's original directive.

A study by ISAF and the Afghan MoIA reported in November 2011 discovered a new range of problems, in particular that “of 166 ‘essential’ criteria to determine if the government was able to recruit, train and sustain the guard force, less than a third could be fully met” and that “sixty-three of the measurements could not be met at all.”⁸⁹

A report in the *New York Times*, based on this study, noted that the MoIA program “has no money available to procure necessary supplies and equipment.” It also found that the training center was not teaching leadership skills and could not generate enough guards to meet the forecasted demand. Furthermore, the MoIA failed to provide the seed money – about \$10 million – to prop up a state-owned business to run the program, while the

⁸⁹ Ray Rivera, “Obstacles Hinder Formation of Afghan Security Force, Report Says,” *New York Times*, November 1, 2011.

program had already failed to supply personnel and equipment for some of its contracts. The report concluded that the police protection force “is not on track” to assume the responsibilities of the private security companies by March 2013.⁹⁰

An official working for Gen. John R. Allen, the previous commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, stated on background that, “It’s become a top priority because if it doesn’t work, everything grinds to a halt...If it isn’t sorted out, everyone will pull out because they don’t want some fly-by-night security protecting them.”

A SIGAR report in January 2012 found similar problems with the entire APPF effort.⁹¹

As noted in previous SIGAR quarterly reports, in August 2010, President Karzai had decreed that all national and international PSCs would be disbanded by the end of the year. Instead, the MoI announced in December 2010 that PSCs could continue to operate with new restrictions that would prevent them from conducting actions that fall within the authority of Afghan law enforcement agencies.

In March 2011, the Afghan government released its bridging strategy for Transitioning the lead on security from PSCs to the APPF. This strategy allowed PSCs that were licensed by the MoI and had agreed to certain staffing limitations to operate and perform security for diplomatic and ISAF projects; however, PSCs that perform security services for development and humanitarian projects were to be replaced by the APPF by March 2012.

In September 2011, the MoI, ISAF, and representatives of the U.S. Embassy Kabul completed a six-month assessment of the effectiveness of the bridging strategy and the capacity of the APPF, according to DoD. Specifically, the assessment reviewed whether the APPF will be able to effectively manage and provide security to ISAF and ANSF construction sites and ISAF bases at the end of the bridging period. According to the assessment, the APPF was unable to carry out a number of tasks:

- Execute and maintain the business operations necessary to remain a viable and solvent business.
- Recruit, vet, train, pay, equip, deploy, and sustain guard forces to meet contract requirements.
- Negotiate and establish legal and enforceable contracts with customers for security services.
- Command and control security operations across Afghanistan.
- Meet the requirements of the bridging strategy. In addition, the APPF had not created a functioning state-owned entity to support the business operations that are essential to manage and execute contracted security services.

As of December 31, 2011, the APPF had 6,558 personnel, according to CSTC-A. Of those, 5,624 were assigned and present for duty—221 on the LOTFA [Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan] tashkil (funded through the LOTFA) and 5,403 on the MoI tashkil. According to CSTC-A, all LOTFA-funded assigned APPF personnel are trained; however, training data for personnel on the MoI tashkil was not available, specifically for those assigned to security contracts. CSTC-A assumes that all APPF personnel on the MoI tashkil are trained either through ANP courses, the APPF training center, or through on-the-job training.

According to CSTC-A, the MoI is in the process of expanding the LOTFA tashkil to meet the requirements associated with the implementation of Presidential Decree 62. That decree, which President Karzai issued in August 2010, placed the responsibility for the provision of security

⁹⁰ Ray Rivera, “Obstacles Hinder Formation of Afghan Security Force, Report Says,” *New York Times*, November 1, 2011.

⁹¹ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2012, p. 84-85.

services under the direct authority and oversight of the Afghan government through the APPF. PSCs previously provided these services.

Pending approval, the expanded tashkil is expected to authorize billets for 516 uniformed APPF members—including staff for the APPF Training Center and operational staff—to provide the expertise needed to provide security services to the international development community and ISAF. The MoI is also expected to add billets for 130 civilians to support business operations within the APPF.

SIGAR's next quarterly report noted:⁹²

This quarter, the APPF, a state-owned enterprise established by the Afghan government to replace PSCs, began assuming responsibility for providing security for reconstruction programs. Under a two-year “bridging strategy,” the Afghan government planned for the APPF to take over security for all international development projects and convoys on March 20, 2012, and for all military construction sites and bases a year later. On March 18, the Afghan government announced that it had granted 30- to 90-day provisional licenses to some implementing partners to give them time to finalize contracts with the APPF.

The most recent SIGAR report in January 2013 stated:⁹³

As of the end of the quarter, 36 PSCs continue to operate in Afghanistan, most of which will be disbanded; 12 PSCs will continue to provide diplomatic security after the transition. The APPF has signed 198 contracts for their services.

As part of the transition, the APPF, a state-owned enterprise under the authority of the MoI, was expected to assume responsibility for security of development and humanitarian projects in March 2012. However, as noted in SIGAR's October 2012 quarterly report, it was unclear if the APPF had achieved that goal. IJC noted that the APPF had yet to provide security for all sites and was not providing convoy security. The APPF is scheduled to assume responsibility for security at military installations in March 2013.

The APPF has been growing rapidly and continues to integrate former PSC guards into its ranks. Last quarter, the number of personnel in the APPF nearly doubled over the preceding quarter. As of December 26, 2012, the number of personnel assigned to the APPF was 14,141—a 25% increase since last quarter—according to CSTC-A. Of these, 826 were officers, 1,539 were NCOs, and 11,776 were guards.¹⁶⁶ As of June 4, 2012, the target goal for the APPF was approximately 30,000 guards by March 2013.

Similarly, the DoD reported on April 30, 2012, that,⁹⁴

The Bridging Strategy for Presidential Decree 62 (August 16, 2010) stated that commercial, development fixed site, and convoy security services, including ISAF convoys, must Transition to the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) by March 20, 2012, with security services for ISAF bases and construction sites Transitioning to APPF by March 20, 2013.

Six- and nine-month assessments were completed by MoI, ISAF, and U.S. Embassy personnel during September 2011 and January 2012. Results indicated the APPF was not on track to meet the requirements of the Bridging Strategy. The assessments concluded the State Owned Enterprise (SOE) was not developed and lacked sufficient leadership, training capacity, resources, and planning necessary for increased roles and responsibilities. The Afghan Government acknowledged the assessment and requested assistance from ISAF and the U.S. Embassy. As a result the APPF Advisory Group was established to partner with the Afghan Government and build adequate APPF capacity and capability.

⁹² SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, April 30, 2012, p. 5.

⁹³ SIGAR *Quarterly Report*, January 30, 2013, p. 87-88.

⁹⁴ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, April 30, 2012, p. 66-67.

Since that time, the APPF Advisory Group has worked closely with the MoI to advance APPF development, and, as a result, the APPF has made substantial positive progress on critical tasks necessary to begin the Transition of security responsibilities and President Karzai approved the APPF Transition plan. APPF has issued 15 permanent Risk Management Consultant licenses and an additional 31 interim RMCs. These interim RMCs will allow security providers to operate under the APPF even as they pursue permanent RMC licenses. In addition, 40 contracts with commercial and developmental partners are now complete, with six more in the advanced stages of negotiation. The advisory group continues to work closely with the MoI to ensure the APPF matures and continues to support commercial and development efforts.

Replacing one existing problematic force with far inferior forces that are even more subject to corruption presents critical problems for outside and domestic investors and companies, and makes basic security functions uncertain in what is still a war zone at the government's expense. It also will raise the cost of government security forces and of virtually every civil operation that requires more than minimal security.

Insider Attacks: “Green-on-Blue” and “Green-on-Green”

Transition planning and the aid effort must also address a problem that emerged as a key issue in the late summer of 2012: attacks by Afghan forces on US, ISAF, and other Afghan forces.

US Central Command (US CENTCOM) distinguishes four types of “green-on-blue” attacks: Infiltration, when insurgents join the ANSF to “conduct an attack, collect information, obtain material, or create distrust/confusion”; co-opting, in which insurgents “recruit or persuade existing ANSF members to conduct an activity by using intimidation, blackmail or connections”; mimicking, when insurgents “impersonate ISAF or ANSF personnel to conduct a quick attack by using uniforms or forged ID cards”; and destabilizers, ANSF members who attack fellow ANSF or ISAF soldiers because of “stress, mental instability, or drug use.”⁹⁵ In May 2011, 10,000 ANSF uniforms were taken out of bazaars, but it remains unclear how or why they got there and how many are still on the market.⁹⁶

These “green-on-blue” killings need to be put in perspective. On one hand, the numbers involved are still very limited; there were 2 attacks in 2007, rising to 37 in 2012 with over 60 NATO soldiers and civilian contractors killed (“green-on-green” incidents are not reported). For example, “green-on-blue” deaths in August 2012 totaled 15 out of 53 ISAF casualties that month, or 28% of the total. ISAF reporting also showed the trend in total Coalition deaths was dropping; the total of 53 casualties for August 2012 was the highest in 2012 – but is typical of the patterns during the campaign season and compares with 82 in 2011 and 79 in 2010.⁹⁷ Total Coalition deaths stemming from “green-on-blue” attacks in 2012 were 61, in 45 attacks.⁹⁸ These data can be seen in **Figure 39**.

On the other hand, the political impact of “green-on-blue” deaths is very significant. The Taliban and insurgents are fighting a political war to influence and dominate the Afghan people and to drive out the US, other ISAF forces, and aid efforts. The insurgents know that the actual numbers involved are not the issue; what counts is their political impact.

⁹⁵ Nate Jones, “The Plan to Stop Green on Blue Violence,” *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2012.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/01/03/the_plan_to_stop_green_on_blue_violence.

⁹⁶ Nate Jones, “The Plan to Stop Green on Blue Violence,” *Foreign Policy*, January 3, 2012.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/01/03/the_plan_to_stop_green_on_blue_violence.

⁹⁷ BBC, “Afghan insider attacks ‘not harming Nato operations,’” January 15, 2013.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21029384>; Gary Owen, “Afghan attacks on NATO troops aren't the biggest problem,” *Globe and Mail*, January 29, 2013. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/afghan-attacks-on-nato-troops-arent-the-biggest-problem/article7936400/>; Alissa Rubin and Taimoor Shah, “British Soldier Killed and Six Others Wounded in Attack by Afghan Soldier,” *New York Times*, January 8, 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/09/world/asia/british-soldier-killed-by-afghan-soldier-on-base.html?_r=0,

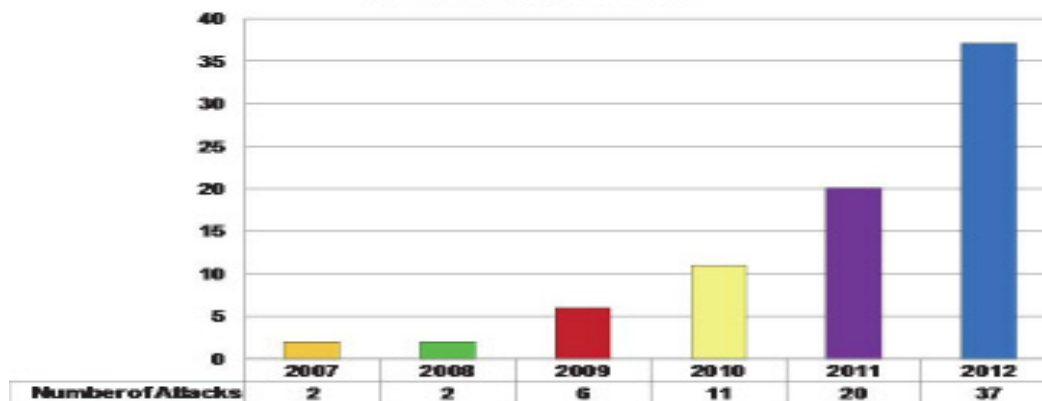
⁹⁸ Associated Press, “Afghan Violence Falls in 2012, Insider Attacks Up,” December 30, 2012.

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/afghan-violence-falls-2012-insider-attacks>.

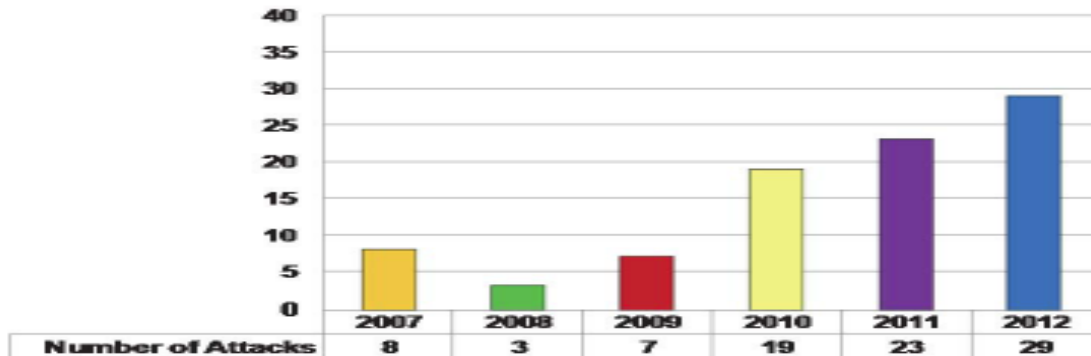
Figure 39: Insider Attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel (2007-2012)

(Attacks Per Year)

Insider Attacks on ISAF Personnel



Insider Attacks on ANSF Personnel



Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (the 1230 Report), December 2012, p. 34-35.

The Political and Strategic Impact of Such Attacks

What are now called “insider attacks” are having a major effect in influencing media coverage of the war, the US Congress, the American public, and the attitudes of other ISAF and donor countries. Like other Taliban and insurgent high-profile attacks on Afghan officials and major targets in Kabul, as well as the pervasive insurgent effort to infiltrate and influence the Afghan countryside and cities, they are having a major impact on overall support for the war in what is a battle of political attrition.

This impact was so serious from the start that the attacks at first led President Karzai to make absurd claims that “foreign intelligence” officers were responsible – creating a new and pointless set of tensions with Pakistan. President Karzai then switched to discussing an investigation into the causes, as if he had not initially blamed the attacks on foreign intelligence agents.

Seeking to Solve the Problem

These attacks have led to unconfirmed media reports that much of the existing vetting system had previously been ignored in the rush to expand Afghan forces.⁹⁹ The ISAF was then forced to temporarily suspend training for 1,000 personnel – as ISAF expands the ALP from 16,300 to 30,000 – in the hope that more intense vetting methods would reduce the problem.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, ISAF had to deal with the political impact of the fact that some 25,000 Afghan soldiers and more than 4,000 Afghan national policemen remained in training for a total force that was then over 350,000.

Articles published after the spike in attacks reported that ISAF was suspending recruitment for the ANA Commandos and SOFs. However, ISAF denied the reports, saying that the recruitment of some 8,000 Commandos and 3,000 ANA SOFs in the recently inaugurated ANA Special Operations Division would continue, along with their normal operational activity. The vetting status of all Commandos and SOFs was being checked, but had no impact on operations.¹⁰¹

ISAF stated that the measures being applied to ANA SOFs and ALP personnel reflected the intensive effort to recheck the vetting status of some 350,000 ANSF personnel as part of a number of actions recently instituted to reinforce existing precautions related to the insider threat. It stated that much of this re-vetting task had already been completed and

⁹⁹ Greg Jaffe and Kevin Sieff, “Training suspended for new Afghan recruits,” *Washington Post*, September 1, 2012. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/training-suspended-for-new-afghan-recruits/2012/09/01/ad4ed1c-f398-11e1-b74c-84ed55e0300b_story.html.

¹⁰⁰ Graham, Bowley and Richard A. Oppel, “NATO Halting Program to Train Afghan Recruits,” *New York Times*, September 2, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/02/world/asia/nato-halting-program-to-train-afghan-recruits.html?_r=2&adxnml=1&seid=auto&smid=tw-nytimes&adxnmlx=1346565647-A0+mn7D5VsIoxHFiR7UYHg.

¹⁰¹ Graham, Bowley and Richard A. Oppel, “NATO Halting Program to Train Afghan Recruits,” *New York Times*, September 2, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/02/world/asia/nato-halting-program-to-train-afghan-recruits.html?_r=2&adxnml=1&seid=auto&smid=tw-nytimes&adxnmlx=1346565647-A0+mn7D5VsIoxHFiR7UYHg.

numbers of individuals, where vetting status was been found to be in doubt, had been suspended pending further investigation or removed from the force.¹⁰²

ISAF further stated that,¹⁰³

The vetting status of all Commandos and Special Operations Forces is also being checked, but this again is having no impact on current operations. The measures being applied to ANA special forces and ALP personnel reflects the intensive effort to recheck the vetting status of the some 350,000 ANSF personnel as part of a number of actions recently instituted to reinforce existing precautions related to the insider threat. Much of this re-vetting task has already been completed and numbers of individuals, where vetting status has been found to be in doubt, have been suspended pending further investigation, or removed from the force.

The synergy between the Afghan government and military and the Coalition has already resulted in several concrete measures to defeat the insider threat. Among the new initiatives being implemented are improvements to the vetting process for new recruits; increasing the number of counterintelligence teams; introduction of interview procedures for ANA soldiers returning from leave; a new warning and reporting system for insider threats; enhanced intelligence exchange between the ANSF and ISAF; establishment of an anonymous reporting system; improved training for counter-intelligence agents; establishment of a joint investigation commission when insider threats occur; and enhanced cultural training to include visits to Coalition home training centers by Afghan Cultural and Religious Affairs advisers, which were authorized by President Karzai this morning.

The SIGAR report for January 2013 noted,¹⁰⁴

The number of insider attacks (people in ANSF uniform attacking their coalition partners) has been on the rise, from two attacks in 2008 to 37 attacks in 2012 (through the end of September). Those 37 attacks resulted in the deaths of 51 coalition personnel, 32 of them U.S. personnel. In addition, ANSF-on-ANSF insider attacks have risen from three in 2008 to 29 in 2012 (through the end of September).

Countering this threat has been a top priority for ISAF and the Afghan government. As noted in SIGAR's October 2012 quarterly report, ISAF had implemented several measures to prevent future attacks. Among them was a "guardian angel" program to protect U.S. and coalition personnel and helping the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) reexamine their vetting program and identify insurgent infiltrators.

Other measures like a "Guardian Angel" program to ensure that no ISAF forces are alone without protection in potential risk areas have been implemented, but it is unclear how well such measures will reduce "green-on-blue" attacks in the future, and how the political impact of future attacks will play out over time. What is clear is that such attacks already have had a major impact on media reporting and public perceptions in ISAF countries, and make it more tempting for ISAF and donor countries to rush for the exits.

This already acts as a major incentive for insurgents to find every possible way to conduct more successful attacks in the in the future, and no system can ever be 100% secure. Moreover, the more the US and its allies reduce their forces, their bases and presence in the field, and their ties to ANSF units, the more vulnerable they become. This will present steadily growing problems as most ISAF combat forces phase out after the

¹⁰² ABC report of brief by Lt. Gen. Adrian Bradshaw, Deputy Commander of the International Security Assistance Force, September 2, 2012.

¹⁰³ ABC report of brief by Lt. Gen. Adrian Bradshaw, Deputy Commander of the International Security Assistance Force, September 2, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ SIGAR *Report to Congress*, January 30, 2013, p. 71.

2013 campaign season, and the problem will be far more serious by the end of 2014 when ISAF partners, advisors, and aid personnel will be deployed in a limited number of bases in the field and at most have a limited ongoing presence at the corps level.

Looking Beyond Green-on-Blue to Green-on-Green and the Strategic Impact

Moreover, the “green-on-blue” attacks are only a symptom of the fact that both the current patterns in the fighting and the overall Transition effort have become part of a much broader political war of attrition and the broader and grimmer patterns of the war.

ISAF and the ANSF may still be winning tactically, but when “green-on-blue” and other politically oriented strikes on both foreign and Afghan targets are considered along with the overall actions of insurgents and the wide range of weaknesses in the Afghan government and ANSF Transition efforts, it is the insurgents that may have the political momentum in the war.

Simply focusing on “green-on-blue” killings does not even put the problems in this one aspect of the war in context. A detailed examination of unclassified casualty reporting shows that official US and ISAF statistics and media coverage of such incidents has been very limited, making it impossible to put the overall problems in “green-on-blue” tensions and Transition in perspective.

For example, ISAF makes a major and undefined distinction between killings due to the Taliban/infiltration and killings due to personal disputes and other reasons. So far, however, the US and ISAF don’t seem to be able to agree on how to define the causes of “green-on-blue” killings, or provide meaningful data on the overall nature of the problem – a fact largely ignored by what might politely be described as an analytically illiterate media.

ISAF and the US can’t decide on whether the Taliban and other insurgents account for 10% or 25% of the direct “green-on-blue” direct kills. Worse, they provide no data on the overall problem that must include a count of “green-on-blue” – and “blue-on-green” – attempts, woundings, and incidents.

As noted earlier, there is no meaningful official reporting on “green-on-green” attacks, where there are no numbers at all. There are no data on the background of attackers to show how other attackers may have been influenced by extremist propaganda, and how they may have been encouraged by insurgents on a target-of-opportunity basis or instead inserted as infiltrators. There have been no supporting public analyses of insurgent tactics to show when they began to focus on such attacks.

Moreover, there has been little official effort to explain that there are good reasons for non-insurgent-backed “green-on-blue” incidents to increase as well. The entire ANSF force-building effort is under stress and forced to recruit lower-quality personnel, men with less-well-known backgrounds, men motivated only by the desire for employment and money, and men from areas where the culture makes them more traditional and less adaptable to encounters with US and ISAF personnel.

Rushing to create a build-up in the ANSF with fewer and less well-qualified recruits who are put under immediate pressure does create tensions, while constant US and ISAF

withdrawals, rotations of personnel and trainers, base closings and realignments, efforts to transfer areas to inexperienced Afghan forces, and problems in providing ANSF forces with adequate leave and recovery time interact with other sources of turbulence in ANSF manpower.

It is also important to remember that the numbers of recent attacks remain small relative to the other patterns of casualties and violence in the war, and it is unclear how much of a surge in such attacks there has really been. One also does not have to be much of a mathematician to see there has been a limited correlation between recent increases in force size and the number of killings per se. Similar increases did not occur in the past when more rapid increases, higher turnover, and less leave and recovery time affected past buildup periods in the ANSF.

It also is hard to make any meaningful comparisons with Vietnam and Iraq. There were some comparable problems, but “green-on-blue” attacks were then treated largely as infiltrations, relations between US and host country forces were usually better since the cultural differences were smaller and the recruiting base was better-educated, Vietnam and Iraq already had forces in being, and both ARVN and Iraqi officers and NCOs were more experienced.

Better vetting may help, and delays in further recruiting of Afghan SOFs and local police may help as well, but there are few reliable records for such vetting. Far too much depends on tribal and local leaders who care more about their power base, while at the same time polygraphs are a nightmare of unreliability, infiltrators can be better trained and given better covers, and vetting will not affect people who become hostile after they enter the force.

Tighter vetting and security measures cause problems of their own, such as breeding distrust and separation of forces. They will present growing problems as trainers and partners – who must be deeply involved with the ANSF and ISAF forces – decline as we move towards 2014 and beyond.

On one hand, this may mean that “green-on-blue” attacks may decline as the ANSF units mature and as ANSF units shake out problem recruits and malcontents. Similarly, they may decline as the training and partnering role puts the Afghans steadily more in charge as well as reduces US and ISAF “visibility” and the sources of clashes between Afghans and outside forces.

On the other hand, if the insurgents organize properly and step up infiltration and efforts to convert men already in the ANSF, the end result could be a lethal combination of new pressures as more and more troops withdraw, ANSF and Afghan faith in US and allied staying power declines, and trainers and mentors become more exposed and isolated.

Accept Risk and Limited Casualties or Accept Defeat

The most important message of “green-on-blue” attacks, however, is that they are only part of a much broader mix of insurgent efforts to win the war on political terms as US and allied forces withdraw. These attacks may be the current focus of ISAF and the media, but there is a critical need for a much broader perspective and examination of what may well be ISAF tactical victories that come at the cost of creeping strategic defeat as Transition proceeds.

The Taliban and other insurgents will have every incentive to use cooption, infiltration, impersonation, and personal motives to keep up insider attacks on both US/ISAF and ANSF targets as the US and ISAF withdraw troops and close the facilities they have secured for themselves. Tragic as the resulting casualties may be, however, they are the price of success in both Afghanistan and in any future cases of this kind. The US and its allies must accept this and make it clear to media and legislators why they are unavoidable, to succeed in staying in the country.

Moreover, it is now impossible to estimate the level of popular and ANSF support the US and other advisory and aid elements will have during and after Transition; how many US and allied combat and enabling forces will remain; how exposed US and other advisors and trainers will be; how much and how many elements of the ANSF will be able to stand on their own; and how active insurgent elements will be in attacking withdrawing US and ISAF forces, those staying in the country, and ANSF forces. All that is clear at this point is:

- (i) Public opinion polls and news reports do indicate a drop in Afghan support for US and ISAF forces;
- (ii) No meaningful US or allied plans have been announced for the number of forces and aid workers that will remain in the field from 2014 onwards; and
- (iii) The ANSF will steadily evolve so that every element develops Afghan solutions to future operations in ways that currently cannot be predicted and will ensure much of the present force-building program is changed or never even fully implemented.

In the narrow case of “green-on-blue” tensions and attacks, vetting and better partnering measures may help to some as-yet unknown degree if handled well, but they are not an answer to the political impact of such attacks or the overall pattern of insurgent political warfare. This is discussed in detail in the paper on strategy and the course of the war referenced at the end of this commentary, and it is highlighted by the stark contrast between UN reporting on the course of the insurgency on the overall patterns in casualties in the war, the US and ISAF military focus on numbers killed and enemy-initiated attacks, and the kinetic patterns in tactical encounters.

Dealing with the mix of insurgent political attacks requires educating political leaders, the media, and the public that enemies will exploit every vulnerability in asymmetric warfare as well as acceptance that the price in terms of casualties is part of the price of continuing the struggle.

This will be an ongoing duel – along with every other aspect of a “war of Transition” that will be fought far more on political than tactical terms. It will also be a duel in which the broader failures in the current US approach to both the military and civil aspects of Transition – coupled with shifts in the overall struggle against a global terrorist threat, inability to push Pakistan to halt support for Afghan insurgents and provision of sanctuaries, and the gross weakness in Afghan politics and governance – add to the risk of defeat.

US and ISAF Withdrawal With or Without Adequate Advisors, Trainers, Partners, and Enablers?

As has already been touched upon, generating the forces that will be required for Transition will be dependent both on outside funding *and on providing the proper mix of outside trainers, mentors, and partners*. Given the current state of the ANA, it is far from clear that the US, other donors, and the Afghan government can create the kind of army that has been called for in current plans while simultaneously withdrawing most US and other ISAF forces by the end of 2014. It is still unclear that enough outside trainers and partners will be available, and that the Afghan government can deal with the economic impact of funding such a force and its civil and police needs.

Current Problems with Trainers and Partners

Some key data on the current trends in trainers are shown in **Figure 40**. This figure reflects serious shortfalls, and it should be stressed the “pledged” trainers are not in-country and often never come.¹⁰⁵ NTM-A experts do say they feel they can work around these issues by substituting other ISAF force elements and Afghan trainers. It is far from clear, however, that such judgments are the product of objective risk assessment versus being forced on NTM-A by political necessity.

There will be critical problems if ISAF and NTM-A cannot correct the shortfalls in the numbers of qualified trainers during 2013-2016. The December 2012 DoD 1230 Report states that,¹⁰⁶

The United States provides the majority of required advisory teams for the ANSF. For this reporting period, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) established 466 Security Force Assistance Teams (SFAT) requirements, of which 13 percent (60 teams) were not filled as of the end of the reporting period. The SFAT requirement for the next reporting period is 460 SFATs for which SHAPE is currently generating forces. The near-term challenge for NATO is how to enlist the support of troop-contributing nations that have specific and readily usable and transferable skill sets for SFA teams, many of which will operate in the field. The number of requirements will decrease through 2013, as the ANSF improve their ability to conduct independent operations.

¹⁰⁵ The DoD reports that the total NTM-A (CJSOR 12.0) number of required trainers is 2,612. The breakdown for this requirement is 723 Army trainers, 257 Police trainers, 140 Medical trainers, 433 Air trainers, 178 logistics trainers, 125 infrastructure trainers, 31 intelligence trainers, 588 security forces, and 137 Special Operations Forces trainers. The total number of 2,612 required trainers reflects a slight adjustment down from 2,778 since March 2012, due to the elimination of 1,499 positions and the addition of 1,337 different positions. These changes reflect the evolution of the NTM-A mission, as Afghans assume responsibility for some tasks, while other tasks become new requirements as new capabilities are brought into operation. The requirements for the draft CJSOR 12.5, which ISAF has submitted to SHAPE for approval, are estimated at 2,135 trainers. If the current level of in-place and pledged trainers remains, it will meet the projected CJSOR 12.5 requirements.

¹⁰⁶ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 85.

Figure 40: Key Data on Trainers and Training – Part One**Outside CSJOR Foreign ANA Trainers: 20% Shortfall**

Required	In Place	Pledged
2,612	1,752	524

ANA Afghan Trainers: 5.8% Shortfall, but 19.8% Shortfall in Trainers for Branch Schools Critical to Transition

Afghan Instructor Locations	SY 1391 Tashkil Instructors Authorized	Instructors Assigned	% Filled	Overall Shortfall	% Over/Short
KMTC	821	810	99.0%	-8	-1.0%
RMTCs	855	544	63.6%	-311	-36.4%
Branch Schools	614	731	119.1%	117	19.1%
CFC	74	75	101.4%	1	1.4%
CSC	56	63	112.5%	7	12.5%
NMAA	270	310	114.8%	40	14.8%
CTC(A)	19	16	84.2%	-3	-15.8%
Total	2,709	2,552	113%	-157	-5.8%

ANP Afghan Trainers: 46.5% Shortfall

Afghan Instructor Locations	1391 Tashkil Instructors Authorized	Instructors Assigned to Region	Trained Instructors Filling Tashkil Positions	% Filled**	Shortfall	% Short
North	163	157	105	64.0%	58	35.6%
Capital	275	275	185	67.0%	90	32.7%
East	454	440	293	65.0%	161	35.5%
South	89	88	86	97.0%	3	3.4%
Southwest	79	32	2	3.0%	77	97.5%
West	150	134	134	89.0%	16	10.7%
Other / Not Assigned*	294	0	0	0.0%	294	100.0%
Total	1,504	1,126	805	53.5%	709	46.5%

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 50-54, 59, 68-69.

Figure 40: Key Data on Trainers and Training – Part Two**ANA Trainee Attrition Per Month**

Course	Number Started	Trainees Graduated	Attrition	Attrition %
Officer Candidate School (OCS)	75	69	6	8.0%
Basic Warrior Training (BWT)	2,183	2,181	2	0.1%
NCO Direct Accessions Course (1U)	450	439	11	2.4%
Total	2,708	2,689	19	0.7%

ANP Trainee Attrition Per Month

Course	Arrived	Trainees Graduated	Attrition *	Attrition %
Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) Basic	926	919	7	0.8%
AUP NCO	364	315	49	13.5%
Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) NCO	28	27	1	3.6%
Afghan Border Police (ABP) Basic	227	184	43	18.9%
ABP NCO	0	0	0	0.0%
Specialist Courses	448	427	21	4.7%
OCS Courses	70	69	1	1.4%
Total *	2,063	1,941	122	5.9%

*Trainee Attrition is calculated on a monthly basis by subtracting the number graduated from the number arrived. The attrition rate is calculated by dividing attrition by the number arrived.

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 50-54, 59, 68-69.

The Most Critical Problems Affecting the US and ISAF Presence Regard What Happens After 2014

So far, even the plans for US and allied withdrawal are unclear. The broad trends in US forces – which along with the UK's have dominated the fighting – are shown in **Figure 41**. Most allied forces are likely to follow a similar pattern in terms of reductions, shifts away from combat roles, and/or new national constraints on combat. For obvious security reasons, most civil aid elements in the field will have to be withdrawn during the course of 2013 and early 2014, and some estimates indicate that the US alone will have to cut back from some 90 US-controlled posts and positions in Afghanistan in mid-2012 to a total of only three to five by the end of 2014.

Vague Statements Instead of Plans

The White House described new US force cut plans, and US goals for Transition and the ANSF, in a statement issued after President Obama's State of the Union Address on February 12, 2013:¹⁰⁷

In his State of the Union address, the President announced that the United States will withdraw 34,000 American troops from Afghanistan by this time next year, decreasing the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan by half – the next step to responsibly bringing this war to a close.

- **Afghans in the Lead:** Beginning in the spring of 2013, Afghan forces will assume the lead across the country. Even as our troops draw down, they will continue to train, advise and assist Afghan forces. In that capacity, we will no longer be leading combat operations, but a sizeable number of U.S. forces will provide support for two additional fighting seasons before Afghan forces are fully responsible for their own security.
- **Planning for post-2014:** We are continuing discussions with the Afghan government about how we can carry out two basic missions beyond 2014: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates.

The Security Transition Process

At the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, the United States, our International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners, and the Afghan Government agreed to transfer full responsibility for Afghanistan's security to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014. This transition process allows the international community to responsibly draw down our forces in Afghanistan, while preserving hard-won gains and setting the stage to achieve our core objectives – defeating al Qaeda and ensuring it can never again use Afghanistan as a launching pad for attacks against us.

At the Chicago NATO Summit in May 2012, leaders reaffirmed this framework for transition and agreed on an interim milestone in 2013 to mark our progress. This milestone will mark the beginning of the ANSF's assumption of the lead for combat operations across the country. When we reach that milestone this spring, ISAF's main effort will shift from combat to supporting the ANSF. As international forces shift our primary focus to training, advising, and assisting, we will ensure that the Afghans have the support they need as they adjust to their new responsibilities.

Today, Afghan forces are already leading nearly 90 percent of operations, and by spring 2013, they will be moving into the operational lead across the country. These forces are currently at a surge strength of 352,000, where they will remain for at least three more years, to allow continued progress toward a secure environment in Afghanistan.

¹⁰⁷ The White House, "Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2013. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/12/fact-sheet-afghanistan>.

As the international community's role shifts and Afghan forces continue to grow in capabilities, coalition troop numbers will continue to decrease in a planned, coordinated, and responsible manner. By the end of 2014, transition will be complete and Afghan Security Forces will be fully responsible for the security of their country.

The United States believes that Afghan-led peace and reconciliation is ultimately necessary to end violence and ensure lasting stability of Afghanistan and the region. As the President has said, the United States will support initiatives that bring Afghans together with other Afghans to discuss the future of their country. The United States and the Afghan Government have called upon the Taliban to join a political process, including by taking those steps necessary to open a Taliban office in Qatar. We have been clear that the outcomes of any peace and reconciliation process must be for the Taliban and other armed opposition groups to end violence, break ties with Al Qaeda, and accept Afghanistan's constitution, including its protections for the rights of all Afghan citizens.

The Afghan Government will be holding presidential and provincial council elections in April 2014 and the United States intends to provide technical assistance and funding to support a fair and inclusive process.

The U.S. Role After 2014

In May 2012, President Obama and President Karzai signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement to cement our long-term relationship in the areas of social and economic development, security, and regional cooperation. The United States remains fully committed to a long-term strategic partnership with the Afghan Government and the Afghan people. The steps we are taking now are intended to normalize our relationship, including withdrawing troops in a way that strengthens Afghan sovereignty and the Afghan state, rather than abandoning it, as the international community did in the 1980's and 90's.

While it is too soon to make decisions about the number of forces that could remain in Afghanistan after 2014, any presence would be at the invitation of the Afghan Government and focused on two distinct missions: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates. As we move towards decisions about a long-term presence, we will continue to assess the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, assess the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, and consult with our Afghan and international partners. We also continue negotiations on a Bilateral Security Agreement with the Afghan Government that would provide the protections we must have for any U.S. military presence after 2014. We hope that agreement can be completed as soon as possible.

Consistent with our goal of ensuring that al Qaeda never again threatens the United States from Afghan soil, the United States has committed to seek funds annually to support training, equipping, advising, and sustaining the ANSF. Helping to fund the ANSF is the best way to protect the investment we all have made to strengthen Afghanistan and insulate it from international terrorist groups.

Strengthening Afghan governance and economic development is also key to achieving our core objective. We've made significant economic and development progress in the past decade, but Afghanistan will require substantial international assistance through the next decade to grow its private sector and promote its integration in greater South Asia's thriving economy. The United States has committed to seek, on a yearly basis, funding for social and economic assistance to Afghanistan. At the July 2012 Tokyo Conference, the international community and Afghanistan agreed on a long-term economic partnership, based on the principle of mutual accountability. We expect Afghan progress in fighting corruption, carrying out reform, and providing good governance as the international community provides support after 2014.

No Clear Picture of Continuing US and ISAF Combat and Enabler Capability After 2014

The practical problem with these statements is that the US is clearly accelerating the pace of its overall withdrawal at a time when our allies are either doing the same or changing their rules of engagement in ways that have a similar effect. The Administration has not, however, announced any clear plans for the forces it will retain through 2014 or after its formal combat mission ends.

It is not clear what combat resources will actually remain, what level of training and partnering will exist, or what allied capabilities – if any – will continue. It is unclear what the mission of any remaining forces will be, how they will support given elements of the ANSF, what their rules of engagement (ROEs) will be, and how they will be based. There is also a lack of specific information regarding any other elements of their capability. Conceptual rhetoric is little more than a smoke and mirrors exercise for covering up the lack of any substantive detail.

This approach cannot deal with the fact that many elements of the ANSF will not be fully ready for Transition before 2016-2017, and that – if combat continues – they will require outside support in the form of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment. At the same time, current force development plans cannot survive engagement with reality. The Afghans must restructure their force development plans to do it their way and to cope with the problems posed by power brokers, ethnic and tribal factions, and corruption.

No precise data are yet available on the pace of US withdrawals from March 2013 to the end of 2014, or the size of US forces after the end of 2014, but the US has already made major cuts in areas like Helmand and it is clear that the major surge in the build-up of the ANSF occurred at a time when US and other ISAF forces experienced a short-term peak and could provide them with both support and the dominant forces involved in combat. They must now be sustained as virtually all of these forces are rapidly withdrawn.

Press reports also provide some indication of US trends in total manpower:

- US forces cut from 66,000 in January 2013 to 60,500 by the end of May 2013. By the end of November, the number will be down to 52,000. By the end of February 2014, the troop level is to be around 32,000-34,000.
- No force level announcements for the rest of 2014, except that all combat forces will be withdrawn by the end of that year.
- US force plans for post-2014 have not been announced, though the *New York Times* estimates below 9,000.¹⁰⁸
- US Central Command head General James Mattis suggested to President Obama that 13,600 troops stay post-2014.¹⁰⁹
- No details on future trainers, partners, enablers, combat forces.

¹⁰⁸ Michael R. Gordon and Mark Landler, “Decision on Afghan Troop Levels Calculates Political and Military Interests,” *New York Times*, February 12, 2013.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/13/us/politics/obama-to-announce-troops-return.html>.

¹⁰⁹ Kristina Wong, “Marine Gen. Mattis Recommends 13,600 U.S. Troops in Afghanistan After 2014,” *Washington Times*, March 5, 2013. <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/5/gen-mattis-13600-us-troops-afghanistan-after-2014/>.

The remaining number of ISAF troops in a post-2014 situation is also unknown. While the DoD said that a NATO-led training mission of 8,000-12,000 troops was likely, the NATO Secretary-General announced that the decision was unlikely to be made until the middle of 2013.¹¹⁰

Like the future level of US and allied spending on Afghan forces, it is as yet unclear what kind of training and combat support the ANSF will have in the future. What is clear, however, is that they still have not corrected the major shortfalls in personnel – much less qualified trainers – that have existed throughout the ANSF force-generation effort. DoD reporting indicated that NTM-A had 1,752 trainers in place at the end of 2012, or 67% of a required 2,612 (which had been downsized from a requirement of 2,778 in March 2012). No data were provided on how many of these trainers were qualified.¹¹¹

These shortfalls were partly compensated for by rushing the training of Afghan trainers. The ANA had 2,552 of 2,709 required Afghan trainers in place at the end of 2012, but it was unclear how qualified these personnel really were. Moreover, the ANP only had 805 trained instructors to meet a requirement of 1,504, or 46.5%.¹¹²

Figure 41 provides a further warning that future US and other ISAF force cuts will come at a time there are still serious shortfalls in the partners to ANSF units. The DoD reported in December 2012 that 118 of 295 ANA units were being advised and 91 more were partnered. This left a total of 58 units of the ANA that needed outside support or assessment that were not receiving either, and another 28 units where NTM-A reported that assessment was not necessary. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe. A total of 118 of 609 ANP units were advised and 145 more were partnered. This left a total of 143 units of the ANP that needed outside support but had not received support or assessment. Another 201 units did not require assessment according to reporting by the NTM-A. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe.¹¹³

There is no way to assess the future impact of these shortfalls. It is clear from past reports that the present training and partnering process is being rushed, and that the ANSF will have far less US and other ISAF support than was originally planned both before and after 2014. It can be argued that forcing the ANA and ANP to rely on their own resources has a positive as well as a negative effect. However, it is also clear that fewer and fewer

¹¹⁰ Amie Ferris-Rotman, “NATO expects decision on post-2014 Afghan force by mid-year,” Reuters, March 4, 2013. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/03/04/uk-afghanistan-nato-rasmussen-idUKBRE9230KP20130304>.

¹¹¹ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 52-53.

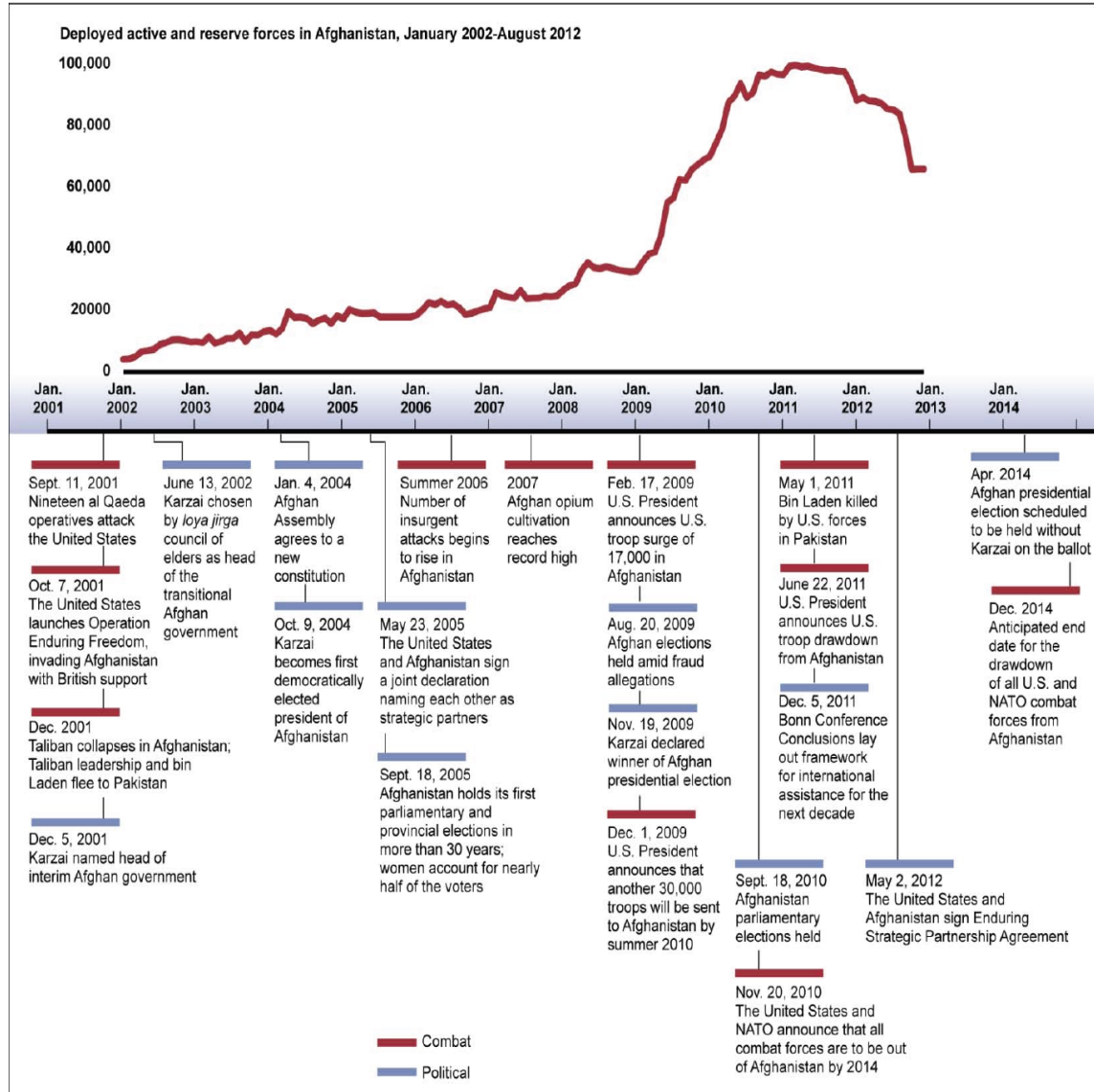
¹¹² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 52-53.

¹¹³ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 88-89.

units will have outside trainers and partners in 2013 and 2014, and that fewer and fewer units will be independently rated.¹¹⁴

The end result is a set of force reductions that seem tailored largely to meet political timing in an effort to rush to the exits – reductions that are not tied to the security conditions on the ground.

¹¹⁴ Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress in accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, December 2012, p. 88-89.

Figure 41: US Troop Levels in Afghanistan (2001-2012)

Sources: Congressional Research Service (active and reserve troop data); White House, DOD, State, Government of Afghanistan, United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and other open-source material (timeline dates and events).

Source: GAO, *Afghanistan: Key Oversight Issues*: GAO-13-218SP, February 2013, p. 5.

Do You Really Need Insurgents When You Have an Indecisive White House?

The longer-term problems in sizing the remaining US and ISAF presence in Afghanistan are becoming critical. As of late March 2013, the White House had failed to provide any meaningful leadership to create a large enough post-2014 advisory, partnering, and enabling effort to meet Afghan needs. Internal squabbles over “CT versus CI” – or counterterrorism versus counterintelligence – cost cutting, budget issues, and domestic priorities have combined with a lack of Presidential decisiveness to stall decision about the future size and nature of the US effort in Afghanistan after 2014.

US leadership is critical to shaping any meaningful strategic relationship and bilateral security agreement with Afghanistan and to persuading key allies like Germany and Italy to keep a strong advisory presence in the north and south. It is equally critical to limiting the impact of the security panic partisan politics helped create over the death of US diplomats in Benghazi and allow State Department and US Agency for International Development (USAID) personnel to take the necessary risks of staying in, and acting in, the field.

There are no magic numbers as to exactly what level of future presence is needed and what kind of budget is required. For all the reasons cited earlier, however, the emphasis should be on more – not taking risks with less. If the US is to stay in Afghanistan, it cannot blunder forward on the basis of being so concerned with marginal increases in risk and cost that it tries to remain half-pregnant in the process – an accomplishment that is particularly suspect in a largely male-dominated effort.

Much depends on decisive US efforts that will allow ISAF and its post-2014 successor to be able to plan for an adequate US and Allied presence after the end of 2014. ISAF experts feel this will require a minimum of some 10,000 US troops and contractors, and 2,000-2,500 allied forces to provide a full range of advisors and enablers. This would allow the Germans to play a key role in the north and the Italians to play such a role in the west.

The US and its allies will also need access to bases outside Kabul in each critical area of the country – the so-called “four corners” approach – and in areas like Herat, Kandahar, etc. The US will need to be able to provide advisors and partners at the corps level for the ANA, combat air support (CAS), and a critical cadre of other enablers and some land combat power to deal with critical failures by some elements of the ANSF. At levels below 10,000, it cannot provide these capabilities or reassure its allies of emergency support they will need in areas like medevac and emergency air transport or combat support.

Creating Adequate Afghan Security Forces

The problems involved in shaping and funding the complex mix of Afghan army, regular police, local police forces, militias, and contract or APPF security forces would be less important if they did not coincide so directly with efforts to create a broad transition to ANSF security operations far more quickly than previously planned. The fact is, however, that the transition to reliance on Afghan forces now has to be much quicker than US, ISAF, and NTM-A planners counted on even a year ago, and deal with the reality that there is declining support for outside force deployments and funding.

Create Realistic, Transparent, and Affordable Plans for the Afghan Security Forces

One key step is to make the actual level of real-world progress in the ANSF far more transparent and show that there really is a credible set of force plans that can be supported with real-world levels of resources. One key task is to focus on a net assessment of the ANSF's military and political capability to actually achieve some form of "victory."

These efforts should focus on the fact that the key task in ANSF development is not to generate more forces, but to generate more effective forces. Moreover, Afghan forces should not be rated on success in meeting manning, training, and equipment goals and/or building facilities.

The Real-World ANSF That Emerges from Transition Will Be Far Different from Today's Force and Manpower Goals

Afghans, as well as the US and its allies, will all need to accept the fact that the ANSF will be driven by pressures that mean major changes in its structure and force goals are inevitable as Transition occurs. These pressures include:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US buildup with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule-of-law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to address the real-world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduce the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning and which are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- Reductions in estimates of the annual cost of the ANSF from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in performance standards and goals.

Measure Effectiveness on the Basis of Net Assessment of Performance Relative to the Threat

Creating an effective ANSF requires a new approach to assessing the development of Afghan forces that is centered on a conditions-based net assessment of how given elements of the ANSF actually perform relative to insurgent factions, tied to a similar assessment of the relative success of the Afghan government, insurgents, power brokers, and other factions in winning support in given areas.

Such assessments must focus on which elements of the ANSF prove to be most effective as Transition occurs as well as their performance in the field. The key test of success from this campaign season onwards will be how key elements of the ANSF actually perform, what level of leadership and unity exists within the Afghan government, who wins public support in key provinces and districts, what level of resources are really required for valuable force elements, and what level of resources are actually available.

Create a Layered Defense That Makes the Most Effective Use of the ANA, AAF, ANCOPS, and Other Elite Elements of the ANP

Plans, force development efforts, and future plans should be based on separately assessing each element of the ANSF. Training, aid, and Afghan resources must be concentrated on building up the force elements that can actually perform effectively in the field. It is both meaningless and actively misleading to focus on the total manning and size of the ANSF, rather than assess it by service.

- The key elements of the force now include large parts of the ANA, which has a current force goal of some 172,005 – or some 49% of the present total manpower goal. The key issue for the success of the entire ANSF will be the performance of the ANA's seven corps in the field, the level of threat involved, the capability to sustain and support these forces, and their future cost relative to future resources.
- Another key element will be the ability to build up a meaningful AAF during 2014-2017, in which the present manpower goal is only 7,639 men or 2% of the 352,000-man force. However, actual air capabilities in terms of combat sustainable aircraft will be a critical factor in the development of the force.
- A third key element will be the ANCOP, which has a present manpower goal of 14,451 or only 4% of the 352,000, but which is one of the few fully effective paramilitary elements of the ANP. The same will be true of police equivalents of SOFs and security detachments, and the paramilitary elements of the DNS.
- The AUP and ABP should be supported, but support should be conditional and focus on effective units, ones that operate with suitable levels of integrity and central government control, and prove effective in the field. It should be conditional on effective Afghan national leadership and management by the MoIA.

The Role of the ALP

The future capability of the best elements of the ALP and the militias that support the government – some 30,000-40,000 men – will do much to determine the government's ability to hold key rural areas. They are not included in the debate over total manning numbers like 352,000 or 228,500, which involves a theoretical discussion over how to reduce the entire ANSF in the future long before the need for a given force becomes clear.

It is already clear that the creation of the ALP is perceived as a major threat by the Taliban, and provides a critical local layer of defense that stays in threatened areas, that is highly motivated to secure these areas, that has limited cost, and can be tied to the central government through the MoIA to the extent the central government can win popular support.

At the same time, the ALP's future is still uncertain. It presents many problems in terms of potential abuses of local power. It is unclear how well it will hold together when US and Afghan SOFs and other trainers leave ALP units. The ANA and ANP have mixed reactions to the ALP, and there have been serious problems when corrupt or ineffective District Chiefs of Police (DCOPs) have failed to work with the ALP. But, it should be stressed that some form of local forces will be critical and the abuses that some elements of the ALP may create must be compared to the real-world abuses of the ANP and GIRoA officials in many areas. Comparing the problems in the ALP to an idealized ANP and GIRoA structure that does not and will not exist is not a meaningful basis for real-world planning.

**Other Elements of the ANP Will Have Marginal Effectiveness,
Remain Corrupt, Lack Adequate Support from Civil Governance and
the Other Elements of a Justice System, and Will Be Tied to Local
Power Brokers**

The other elements of the ANP – such as the AUP and the ABP – do include some highly effective units and many others that have some utility. However, many of these forces, which make up some 45% of the 352,000 total, will remain corrupt, have limited effectiveness, and lack support from effective governance in the field and from the other elements of a criminal justice system.

Barring far stronger Afghan leadership than now seems likely to emerge in 2014, many elements of the ANP may also revert to control by local power brokers or the highest bidder, and much or most of the present NTM-A effort and goals will be replaced with Afghan solutions that allow the AUP and ABP to revert to forces shaped by Afghan resources and standards and that have limited effectiveness.

NTM-A and its successor should continue to try to develop the best force they can, but there should be no illusions. Most of the ANP will need to be dealt with using an order-of-battle approach that make the best use of the best elements of the AUP and ABP and finds some place to locate the rest where they can do some good or the least harm.

***Continued US and Allied Support for the Key Elements of the ANSF
Will Be Needed Through 2018***

The US and its allies need to recognize that many elements of even the ANA will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that – if combat continues – they will require the support of outside of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment.

At present, this seems likely to require a minimum of some 10,000 US forces and some 2,000-2,500 allied forces to provide the full ranges of enabling and supporting services that are needed – a “four corner” training and partnering presence that can cover every major threatened area though at least the corps level – and support in areas like airpower, medevac, intelligence, combat emergencies, and correcting for key problems in logistics

and support. Afghan forces that have been rushed into being will need conditions-based support based on merit and not arbitrary outside manning and funding.

Conditions-Based Support for the ANSF

At the same time, “conditions-based” support does not mean open-ended support for the ANSF any more than it does for the Afghan civil government or economy. No one outside Afghanistan owes Afghanistan support if the government fails to earn it. At present, the lack of leadership, reliance on power brokering, and corruption in both the ANSF and on the civil side of Afghanistan are as much of a threat as the insurgents.

If the Afghans cannot find a successful leader in 2014, produce a reasonable degree of unity and governance, reduce corruption and power brokering to more acceptable levels, and show they can make the ANSF effective, then the US and its allies should react to these facts based on the reality that they have higher strategic priorities than Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The US should be honest in privately communicating to Afghan officials that it already has many incentives to leave Afghanistan and use its resources elsewhere. Moreover, it should remind them that the US has already shown it can largely walk away from Iraq – a country with far more strategic importance than Afghanistan, that it has many higher-priority strategic interests throughout the world, and that it has increasingly constrained resources with which to meet them.

The US and its allies should make it politely but firmly clear that,

- US and other allied strategic interests in Afghanistan are limited, there are many other priorities, and the US and other states can and will leave if Afghans fail to help themselves.
- Afghanistan must demonstrate it has an effective enough president and structure of governance after the 2014 election to earn US and allied support, or see aid and support cut or shifted in part to regional centers of power.
- Corruption and power brokering needs to be sharply reduced and far more emphasis needs to be placed on effective governance.
- The pledges the Afghan government made for reform at the Tokyo conference actually need to be kept.
- Aid will be cut or will not go through GIRoA if GIRoA cannot use it effectively and with reasonable levels of integrity.
- The military aid, advisory, and enabling effort will be dependent on Afghan’s actions and agreement to an effective Bilateral Security Agreement and implementation of a broader Strategic Partnership.
- Grossly corrupt officials and officers that threaten Afghan security and stability during Transition will not be tolerated after the 2014 election, and aid will be halted or reduced to force such changes.

In the case of the ANSF, the US and its allies should make it clear that they are prepared to cut support and funding for force elements that remain grossly corrupt and serve power brokers in ways that do not provide stability or assist the people. If the effort to create “Afghanistan good enough” results in failed Afghan leadership, governance, or ANSF development, the US and its allies should regard an exit from Afghanistan as mandatory.

The Underlying Need to Debate Staying in Afghanistan

At the same time, the US and its allies need to examine their reasons for staying in Afghanistan, and understand that they cannot succeed with half measures that are on the cheap. Sometimes hard decisions have to be made on the basis of “how much is too little?” rather than on the basis of “how much is too much?” If Washington is to pay these costs, the US needs an honest and open debate about the need to make this level of effort, and deploy adequate forces.

The US needs to debate the realities of staying in Afghanistan on a meaningful basis. In the process, the US needs to recognize the reality that “Afghanistan good enough” will often be “Afghanistan bad enough.” Conditionality does not mean that America and its allies do not have to be ready to live with the fact that the best foreseeable Afghanistan will still be a nation with significant levels of corruption and many Afghan leaders will fail to meet the standards of American political correctness. It means living with Afghan internal struggles over politically sensitive issues like women’s rights, secular reform, and education.

In balance, there currently seems to be a case for properly resourcing a continuing effort. But the US needs to forge some kind of lasting consensus about providing such support if the Afghans do their part. This means the US needs to honestly assess benefits, costs, risks, and conditionality in a public forum in a way that focuses on the future rather than the present or past sunk costs and mistakes. If the US is to stay the course, there must be enough continuing transparency to show that progress is real enough to matter, that the prospects of further success continue to be worth the cost, and that the US is making the right commitment – rather than either wasting blood and money or taking a cheap and politically convenient route to the exit.

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Before joining CSIS, Cordesman served as director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and as civilian assistant to the deputy secretary of defense. He also served in other government positions, including in the State Department and on NATO International Staff. In addition, he served as director of policy and planning for resource applications in the Energy Department and as national security assistant to Senator John McCain. His numerous foreign assignments have included posts in the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iran, as well as with NATO in Brussels and Paris. He is the author of a wide range of studies on energy policy, national security, and the Middle East, and his most recent publications include *Pakistan—Violence vs. Stability: A National Net Assessment* (CSIS 2011); *Afghan National Security Forces: What It Will Take to Implement the ISAF Strategy* (CSIS, 2010); *Iraq and the United States: Creating a Strategic Partnership* (CSIS, 2010); *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Praeger, 2009); *Iranian Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Birth of a Regional Nuclear Arms Race?* (Praeger, 2009); *Withdrawal from Iraq: Assessing the Readiness of Iraqi Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009); and *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009).



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Cover photo: Pfc. Steven Johnston of Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 170th Infantry Brigade, provides security outside an Afghan National Police Headquarters in Nili, May 3, in Daykundi province, Afghanistan. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Adrienne Brammer.

